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SALAR
DIGITAL ENGLISH DAILY, BENGALURU

ساڈہ روزنامہ بنگلور

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WORDS of WISDOM

I think the world needs many more young angry women, to be honest. Especially with everything going on right now. That's the thing we need the most

-Greta Thunberg, climate activist, on US Prez Donald Trump calling her 'woman with anger issues'

Went too far: Musk sorry for posts on Trump

WASHINGTON, 11 JUNE

Tech billionaire Elon Musk has expressed regret over his recent remarks about US President Donald Trump, stating that some of his posts last week "went too far". Taking to his official handle on X (formerly Twitter), Musk posted, "I regret some of my posts about Presi-dent @realDonaldTrump last week. They went too far." Meanwhile, Trump warned Musk of "serious consequences" if he funds Democratic candidates running against Republicans backing the GOP's budget bill, escalating tensions between the two influential fig-ures. *—PTI*

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HC suspends Janardhan's term in mining case

HYDERABAD, 11 JUNE

The Telangana High Court on Wednesday suspended the conviction and sentence handed down to former Karnataka minister Gali Janardhan Reddy in the Obulapuram Mining Company (OMC) illegal iron ore mining case and granted him bail. The High Court also granted bail to three others convicted alongside Reddy—his brother-in-law and OMC Managing Director BV Srinivas Reddy, former Director of Mines and Geology (Andhra Pradesh), VD Rajagopal, and Reddy's aide Mehafuz Ali Khan. *—PTI*

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N Indians advised to stay indoors amid heatwave

NEW DELHI, 11 JUNE

The Health Ministry on Wednesday urged people to stay indoors during peak hours, and to drink safe fluids as the India Meteorological Department (IMD) issued a warning that daytime temperatures in the national capital may hit 45°C. Several parts of Haryana and Punjab continued to reel under a heatwave, with Sirsa recording the highest maximum temperature in the two states at 46.6 degrees Celsius. Blistering heat also swept Punjab's Amritsar as it recorded a high of 45.8 degrees Celsius. "Extreme heat can be risky. Stay indoors during peak hours, eat lower-calorie food, drink safe fluids, and never leave kids or pets in parked cars," the health ministry posted on X. "Call 108/102 if someone shows signs of heatstroke," the IMD said in its warning. *—Agencies*

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ED raids Congress Ballari MP, 3 MLAs in Valmiki case

ED says the scam money was used to woo voters in LS polls

BENGALURU, 11 JUNE

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Wednesday conducted raids at multiple locations linked to Con-gress leaders, including Ballari MP E Tukaram and three MLAs, in the Valmiki Corporation money laun-dering case.

The searches were carried out at eight premises — five in Ballari and three in Bengaluru — under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA). The MLAs under investigation are Nara Bharath Reddy (Ballari City), JN Ganesh (Kampli), and NT Srinivas (Kudligi).

The ED is probing allegations that funds siphoned from the Karnataka Maharshi Valmiki ST Development Corporation (KMVSTDC) were laundered and used to fund the 2024 Lok Sabha election campaign in Bel-lary, including cash handouts to voters and Congress workers.

The case stems from FIRs filed by the Karnataka Police and CBI, which allege that crores of rupees meant for tribal welfare were fraudulently transferred to fake accounts and routed through shell enti-ties.

The scam came to light after the suicide of KMVSTDC accounts superintendent

E Tukaram *PHOTO: X*

Chandrasekharan P in May 2024. His note implicated top officials in the illegal fund transfers. Former tribal welfare minister B Nagendra, an MLA from Bellary Rural, and five associates were earlier arrested in the case. Though Nagendra later received bail, he resigned following the allegations. He claimed he had no knowledge of the fraudulent transfers, blaming the corporation's MD, JG Pad-manabha. However, Padmanabha told the ED he acted under pressure from superiors. According to the ED, Nagendra handled a large portion of the proceeds of crime and facilitated voter payments of Rs 200 each to boost support for Congress candidate E Tukaram. The KMVSTDC, established in 2006, is mandated to uplift Scheduled Tribe communities in Karnataka. *—PTI*

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GRANTS BAIL TO MAN

PHOTO: FREEPIK

States can't interfere in interfaith marriages, says SC

NEW DELHI, 11 JUNE

- The case was initiated after the bride's cousin filed a complaint, alleging that the groom's religion was only discovered after visiting his family home in Delhi.

The Supreme Court last month granted bail to Aman Siddiqui, a Muslim man arrested in December 2024 under the Uttarakhand Freedom of Religion Act for marrying a Hindu woman. Siddiqui was accused of concealing his religious identity and marrying according to Hindu customs.

A bench comprising Justice BV Nagarathna and Justice SC Sharma observed that the state cannot object to the couple living together since their marriage was conducted with the consent and wishes of their respective parents and families. Siddiqui had been jailed for nearly six months before the bail was granted on 19 May.

The case was initiated after the bride's cousin filed a complaint, alleging that the groom's religion was only discovered after visiting his family home in Delhi. The police booked Siddiqui under the 2018 Uttarakhand Freedom of Religion Act and sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, while the Uttarakhand High Court had rejected his bail plea in February.

The prosecution argued that Siddiqui and his family deliberately concealed their religion to facilitate the marriage, and noted the marriage was not conducted under the Special Marriage Act, which is typically used for interfaith unions.

The Supreme Court also took into account an affidavit submitted by Siddiqui shortly after his wedding, in which he pledged not to compel his wife to convert and to respect her religious freedom. The Court's decision emphasises the right of consenting adults to mar-ry regardless of religion, reinforcing protections against misuse of anti-conversion laws. *—Agencies*

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Aadhaar must for booking Tatkal tickets from 1 July

NEW DELHI, 11 JUNE

Only Aadhaar authenticated users will be able to book tickets under the Tatkal scheme from 1 July on-wards, the Railway Ministry has said in a circular issued on Tuesday. It said the decision has been taken "to ensure that the benefits of the Tatkal Scheme are received by the common end-users".

"With effect from 01-07-2025, tickets under Tatkal scheme can be booked through the website of Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC)/ its app only by Aadhaar authenticated users," the ministry said.

Aadhaar-based OTP authentication shall also be made compulsory for Tatkal bookings from 15 July on-wards.

"Tatkal tickets shall be available for booking through computerized PRS (Passenger Reservation System) counters of Indian Railways/authorised agents only after authentication of a system-generated OTP, which shall be sent through the system on the mobile number furnished by the users at the time of booking. This shall also be implemented by 15/07/2025," the circular said. It said authorised ticketing agents of the Indian Railways will not be permitted to book Tatkal tickets dur-ing the first 30 minutes of the window. Specifically, they will be restricted from booking Tatkal tick- ets for air-conditioned classes from 10am to 10.30am and for non-air-conditioned classes from 11am to 11.30am. *—PTI*

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US & CHINA TRADE DEAL IS FINALLY DONE

WASHINGTON, 11 JUNE

President Donald Trump announced Wednesday that the United States will get magnets and rare earth minerals from China under a new trade deal and that tariffs on Chinese goods will go to 55 per cent. In return, Trump said the US will provide China "what was agreed to," including allowing Chinese stu-dents to attend American colleges and universities. Several global brands are at risk of using forced labour through their Chinese supply chains because they use critical minerals or buy minerals-based products sourced from the far-western Xinjiang region of China, an international rights group said Wednesday .*—PTI*

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RT-PCR must to meet PM amid Covid surge

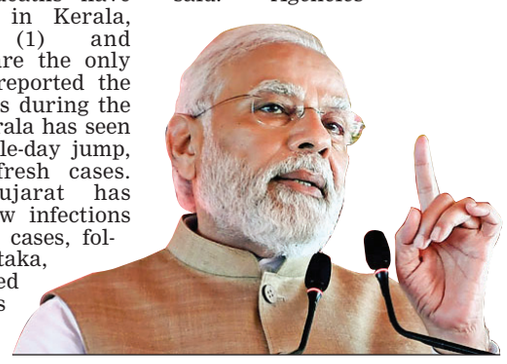
NEW DELHI, 11 JUNE

An RT-PCR test has been made a must for ministers, MPs and MLAs wanting to Prime Minister Narendra Modi as active Covid-19 cases in the country crossed the 7,000 mark on Wednesday, sources said.

Around 70 BJP functionaries from Delhi, including the Delhi Chief Minister, all seven MPs and MLAs who are scheduled to meet Prime Minister Modi at his residence this evening, will undergo an RT-PCR test, they said.

The Union Health Ministry on Wednesday released an official statement, saying that the country has witnessed 306 new cases of Covid 19 and six related deaths in a day.

While three deaths have been recorded in Kerala, Maharashtra (1) and Karnataka (2) are the only states to have reported the remaining deaths during the same period. Kerala has seen the highest single-day jump, reporting 170 fresh cases. Meanwhile, Gujarat has recorded 114 new infections and 1,223 active cases, followed by Karnataka, which has logged 100 new cases, as per the data. Delhi recorded 66 fresh cases in the last 24 hours and the city's total caseload reached 757, the Health Ministry said. *— Agencies*



CENTRE APPROVES DOUBLE LINE RLY PROJECT FOR KARNATAKA

NEW DELHI, 11 JUNE

The Union Cabinet has approved two major railway projects worth ₹6,405 crore, including the doubling of the 185-km Ballari–Chikjajur line passing through Ballari and Chitradurga districts in Karnataka. The project aims to boost connectivity, ease freight movement, and support regional economic growth. Once completed, it will help transport key commodities like iron ore, steel, cement, and agricultural produce. *—ANI*

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K'TAKA TO CONDUCT FRESH CASTE SURVEY IN 60-70 DAYS: CM

CHIKKABALLAPUR, 11 JUNE

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Wednesday confirmed that Karnataka will undertake a fresh caste re-enumeration exercise within 60–70 days, following a directive from the Congress high command.

Addressing reporters, Siddaramaiah said the high command emphasised that the original survey, con-ducted in 2015-16, was nearly a decade old and had drawn complaints of exclusion. "We are not re-jecting the report prepared by the Backward Classes Commission. It is accepted in principle. Only a re-enumeration will be done," he said, adding the decision was not his or the cabinet's but that of the party leadership.

According to official sources, the modalities for the re-enumeration are likely to be discussed during the cabinet meeting on Thursday.

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge also supported the move, stating that a re-survey was necessary as many new communities had come under OBC categories over the past 10 years.

The decision follows widespread criticism of the earlier caste census, especially from Karnataka's domi-nant communities — Vokkaligas and Veerashaiva-Lingayats — who termed it "unscientific." Several Con-gress leaders had also raised objections. The original survey was commissioned during Siddaramaiah's first tenure in 2015. The final report, pre-pared under chairperson K Jayaprakash Hegde, was submitted in February 2024 and had been under cabinet consideration since April. *—PTI*

>>>More on Page 2

Govt says no plan to charge UPI payments above Rs 3K

NEW DELHI, 11 JUNE

The Union Finance Ministry on Wednesday dismissed claims that the government is considering levying charges on Unified Payments Interface (UPI) transactions above Rs 3,000, calling such reports "completely false, baseless, and misleading."

In an official post on social media platform X, the ministry clarified there is no proposal to introduce a Merchant Discount Rate (MDR) on UPI payments. It warned that such speculation creates unnecessary confusion among users and businesses, especially as digital adoption continues to rise.

The clarification follows media reports suggesting the Centre was evaluating MDR on high-value UPI payments to help banks and payment service providers manage increasing infrastructure and operational costs. The report claimed the Payments Council of India had proposed a 0.3% MDR for large merchants and that discussions were ongoing with stakeholders including the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI).

However, the government has not confirmed any such deliberations. UPI currently powers 80 per cent of India's retail digital transactions, with person-to-merchant payments exceeding Rs 60 lakh crore since 2020. Despite concerns from banks and fintechs, the government remains committed to a free, accessible digital payment system. *—Agencies*

CHILL BUT NOT TOO MUCH

Govt takes the remote: ACs to now stay between 20°C & 28°C

NEW DELHI, 11 JUNE

The Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE), under the Ministry of Power, is developing a framework to standardise default temperatures for air conditioners between 20°C and 28°C, in a bid to enhance energy effi-ciency across India.

Union Power Minister Manohar Lal confirmed on Tuesday that discussions are underway with appliance manufacturers, automakers, and state governments to finalise the temperature range. The minister also stated that air conditioners in vehicles are being considered for inclusion under the new guidelines. How-ever, no fixed timeline has been announced yet.

The initiative aims to reduce power consumption, particularly during peak summer months, ease pres-sure on the national grid, and extend the lifespan of cooling units. The move is also expected to encour-age the adoption of more energy-efficient technologies.

Air-conditioning manufacturers, including Voltas, LG Electronics, Blue Star and Haier, have expressed support for the proposed standardisation. They affirmed that the industry will comply within a few months, including resetting existing inventory and implementing firmware changes in remote controls.

These modifications are expected to be minimal, and the companies assured that consumers will not bear any additional costs. Full implementation may take up to six months. *—PTI*

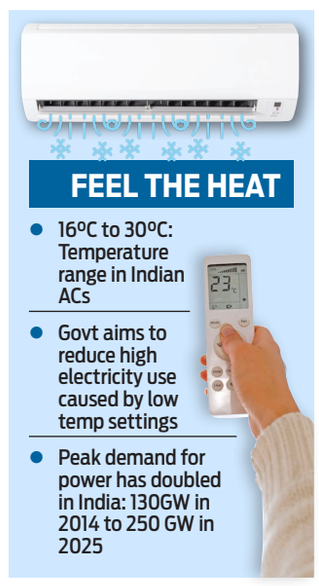

AUTOMATIC
FEEL THE HEAT
16°C to 30°C: Temperature range in Indian ACs
Govt aims to reduce high electricity use caused by low temp settings
Peak demand for power has doubled in India: 130GW in 2014 to 250 GW in 2025

PHOTO: ANI

Woman officer stabbed to death in Vijayapura

VIJAYAPURA, 11 JUNE

Renuka Saibanna Kannolli, a 30-year-old second division clerk at the Social Welfare De-partment office in Indi town, was stabbed to death on Wednesday. Renuka, a resident of Kannolli village in Indi taluk, was attacked while walking to her office after getting down from a government bus. Sanju Banasode from Agarkhed village followed her and, after she refused to speak with him, stabbed her at the busy Tippu Sultan Circle. Bystanders rushed Renuka to Indi government hospital and apprehended Banasode, who was hand-ed over to the police. She was later transferred to Vijayapura government hos-pital, where she succumbed to her injuries. Renuka, a widow, had secured her government job on compas-sionate grounds following the recent death of her hus-band, who worked with Firefighter and Emergency Services in Vijayapura. Vijayapura Superintendent of Police Lak-shman Nimbaragi stated that Banasode had repeatedly harassed her, and when she did not respond, he attacked her. ***—Salar News***

KUSUM-C to ensure 7-hour daytime power for farmers

BENGALURU, 11 JUNE

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah announced that the KUSUM-C scheme will guarantee farmers a reliable seven-hour day-time electricity supply for agricultural pump sets. Speaking at the inaugura-tion of a solar unit in Gauribidanur, he said 389 substations are being sola-rised, powering 1,555 feed-ers and benefiting over 6.3 lakh pump sets with 2,396 MW of solar energy. Siddaramaiah criticised the previous BJP government for delaying implementa-tion and highlighted the state's increased subsidy under the KUSUM-B scheme, from 30 per cent to 50 per cent. He affirmed the government's commit-ment to free electricity for farmers and outlined plans to raise power generation capacity to 60,000 MW by 2030. Energy Minister J George also revealed plans to install prepaid smart meters in government offices to improve accountability under the Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme. ***—PTI***

PHOTO: X

Labourer crushed to death at stone crusher near Malur

MALUR, 11 JUNE

A 35-year-old labourer from West Bengal was killed in a tragic accident at a stone crushing unit near Malur on Tuesday morning. The incident occurred around 8:00 am at Ishwarya Stone Crusher in Makarahalli under Masthi police limits. According to Masthi Police Inspector Om Prakash, the deceased, Nandalala, was cleaning beneath the automatic conveyor belt when he accidentally placed his hand on the belt, which dragged him into the crusher, resulting in his death. Police have regis-tered a case at Masthi sta-tion. This is one among several such fatal acci-dents reported in quarries and stone crushing units in the area, where safety norms are often neglected. Industry safety expert H.S. Sridhar said that units using automatic conveyor belts must install sen-sor-based safety curtains, which automatically cut power if human contact is detected, potentially pre-venting such tragedies. ***—Salar News***

Won't back breach of law: CM on ED raids

Probe agency says it has uncovered a complex money laundering network in Valmiki corp

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah with Energy Minister KJ George and others during the unveiling of the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Urja Suraksha Evam Utthaan Mahabhiyan (PM-KUSUM) Component-C Scheme at Gauribidanur on Wednesday ***PHOTO: SALAR***

CHIKKABALLAPUR, 11 JUNE

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Wednesday said his gov-ernment will neither support any violation of the law nor obstruct its enforcement, fol-lowing Enforcement Directorate (ED) raids on a Congress MP and three MLAs in the alleged Valmiki Corporation scam.

The ED carried out searches at eight locations under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), including five in Ballari and three in Bengaluru. Premises linked to Congress Ballari MP E Tukaram and MLAs Nara Bharath Reddy (Ballari City), J N Ganesh (Kampli), and N T Srinivas (Kudligi) were searched.

> **The ED is targeting Congress MLAs and MPs. The main goal of the NDA is to weaken the Congress by conducting raids on its leaders. But since the Congress is united, that won't be possible**
>
> —Mallikarjun Kharge, Cong president

"What should I do? The ED has conducted raids. Let them do whatever they want in accordance with the law," said Siddaramaiah, responding to media questions.

The ED is investigating alle-gations that funds siphoned from the Karnataka Maharshi Valmiki Scheduled Tribes Development Corporation (KMVSTDC) were used for election expenses during the 2024 Lok Sabha polls. According to a chargesheet filed last year, personal assis-tants of then minister B Nagendra ad-mitted to han-dling large amounts of money, which were allegedly distrib-uted to voters and party work-ers.

The ED claimed Rs 200 was given to each of the 7.4 lakh voters in Ballari, totalling over Rs 14 crore, along with Rs 10,000 per polling booth to party workers, amounting to Rs 72 lakh. The three MLAs alleg-edly ensured cash distri-bution in their constituencies, the agency said.

The scam reportedly saw over Rs 187 crore siphoned from funds meant for welfare schemes between March and May 2023.

The ED said it uncovered a complex money laundering network within the corpo-ration, with cash handed over under the direct instructions of Nagendra. ***—PTI***

T'gana HC suspends Janardhan's term in mining case, grants bail

HYDERABAD, 11 JUNE

The Telangana High Court on Wednesday suspended the conviction and sentence hand-ed down to for-mer Karnataka minister Gali Janardhan Reddy in the Obulapuram Mining Company (OMC) ille-gal iron ore mining case and granted him bail.

The High Court also granted bail to three others convicted alongside Reddy—his brother-in-law and OMC Managing Director BV Srinivas Reddy, former Director of Mines and Geology (Andhra Pradesh), VD Ra-jagopal, and Reddy's aide Mehafuz Ali Khan.

A special CBI court in Hyderabad had convicted the four on 6 May, sentencing them to seven years of rigor-ous imprisonment. Following this, they approached the High Court seeking suspension of their sen-tence and release on bail.

The court allowed their plea, suspending the sentence and granting them bail upon fur-nishing a personal bond of Rs 10 lakh each, along with two sureties of the same amount. The accused have been direct-ed not to leave the country without prior court permis-sion.

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) had regis-tered the case on 8 December 2009, alleging a crimi-nal con-spiracy to illegally mine iron ore in the Bellary Reserve Forest area, straddling the Karnataka-Andhra Pradesh border.

According to the CBI, the accused manipulated mining lease boundary markings and trespassed onto government and private land to extract iron ore, causing an estimated loss of over Rs 800 crore to the public exchequer.

The suspension of sentence allows Reddy and the others to remain free pending further proceedings in the case. *—PTI*

'Yogi didn't quit over Kumbh stampede, why should our CM?'

KALABURAGI, 11 JUNE

Rejecting the demand for Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and his deputy DK Shivakumar's resignation in connection with the 4 June RCB stampede that killed 11, Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge on Wednesday asked whether Uttar Pradesh CM Yogi Adityanath quit following the Kumbh Mela stampede this year.

Expressing pain over the loss of lives, he said it should be ensured that such incidents don't repeat.

He added that when Siddaramaiah and Shivakumar met him and for-mer AICC president Rahul Gandhi in New Delhi on Tuesday, there was no discus-sion about a cabinet reshuffle or change of KPCC president in Karnataka. "It was a courte-sy call by the CM and DCM. We have discussed two or three issues – stampede, caste census and other matters relating to administration," Kharge said. *—Salar News*

Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge expressed pain over the deaths in the stampede and said such incidents should not repeat ***PHOTO: SALAR***

HC reserves order on RCB marketing head's bail plea

Rahul, who was injured in the stampede during RCB celebrations at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium, waits at the office of Bengaluru Urban DC Jagadeesha G after he was called for an inquiry on Wednesday ***PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD***

BENGALURU, 11 JUNE

The Karnataka High Court on Wednesday reserved its order on interim bail for **Nikhil Sosale**, Marketing Head of Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB), arrested in the stam-pede near M Chinnaswamy Stadium that killed 11 people. The court will pro-nounce its verdict at 2:30 pm on 12 June.

Sosale was arrested by the Central Crime Branch at Bengaluru airport on 6 June as he attempted to board a flight to Dubai. In his petition, Sosale questioned the legality of his arrest, alleging political inter-ference.

Advocate General Shashi Kiran Shetty told the court that RCB's official social media account announced a victory parade at the stadium on 4 June without official per-mission. He also claimed Sosale booked his flight tick-ets at 10.56 pm on 5 June, hours before the arrest, sug-gesting intent to flee.

Meanwhile, CM Sidda-ramaiah in Gauribidanuru, dismissed opposition demands for his resignation. He cited past tragedies, questioning whether Uttar Pradesh CM Yogi Adityanath or former Gujarat CMs resigned over such incidents. *—Salar News*

On caste census re-survey

Speaking about the caste census re-survey, Kharge said, "A caste survey was conducted 10 years ago. Many from different communi-ties have requested the government to con-duct a re-survey. We have sug-gested to the CM and DyCM to conduct a re-survey without rejecting the report submitted by the Kan-tharaj Commission." He added that a re-sur-vey will include castes and sub-castes that were not covered earlier, including OBCs.

'Modi erred 33 times in 11 yrs'

Attacking the Modi government on its 11th anniversary, Kharge said, "In the 11 years of Modi's rule, 33 major mistakes have been made. I have never seen a Prime Minister who... deceives the youth and the poor, and uses that deceit to win votes." He added, "Be it demonetisation, job creation, or Minimum Support Price (MSP) for farmers — there are many such issues. He never admitted to lying or making mistakes."

GOLDEN GLEAM

Top gold medalist and topper Anusha flanked by other two toppers during the fourth convocation of Bangalore City University (BCU) at Jnana Jyothi Auditorium in Bengaluru on Wednesday ***PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD***

AMID DEMAND CRASH

Shut down in Kolar over MSP for mango

SRINIVASAPUR, 11 JUNE

Deputy Commissioner MR Ravi has promised to send a team to juice factories to negotiate purchases ***PHOTO: SALAR***

Mango growers in Srinivasapur, Kolar, observed a complete bandh on Wednesday, demanding gov-ernment intervention as plummeting mango prices threaten their livelihoods. The shutdown, called by the Srinivasapur Mango Growers' Association, saw widespread support. Shops, hotels, and businesses remained shut, vehicles stayed off the roads, and government offices and schools witnessed sparse attendance.

The farmers are urging the State government to announce a Minimum Support Price (MSP) for mangoes, citing unsustainable market rates despite Srinivasapur being one of India's largest mango markets. Mango cultivation spans approximately 45,000 hectares in Kolar, sustaining thousands of families. Srinivasapur's fruit market sees daily arrivals of 900–950 metric tonnes from May through July.

While traders from across India frequent the market, juice factories in Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu remain key buyers. However, this year, a glut in those facto-ries has led to a drastic fall in demand. Andhra Pradesh's announcement of a Rs 4.18/kg MSP, with average rates around Rs 8/kg, further com-pounded the price crash in Karnataka. Currently, man-goes in Srinivasapur are sell-ing at just Rs 3,000 to Rs 4,000 per MT, compared to Rs 10,000 to Rs 12,000 in previous years.

Farmers have submitted a memorandum to district offi-cials. Deputy Commissioner MR Ravi convened a meeting with growers and promised to send a team to negotiate pur-chases with juice factories, while exploring other sale ave-nues.

Former MP S Muniswamy also urged the State govern-ment to fix an MSP, noting the ripple effect on thousands dependent on the mango trade — including transporters, labourers, and small vendors. He stressed the urgent need for government action to safe-guard livelihoods.

"This isn't just about farm-ers; it's about an entire ecosys-tem of rural workers," Muni-swamy said. *—Salar News*

State to hand over 10 acres to AAI for Mysuru airport

MYSURU, 11 JUNE

The expansion of Mysuru Airport runway to support long-haul flights is set to accel-erate, with the Karna-taka government finalising land acquisition and initiating util-ity shifting works.

District in-charge Minister HC Mahadevappa announced on Wednesday that the gov-ernment will soon hand over the remaining 10 acres of land to the Airports Authority of India (AAI), completing the required 240 acres for the proj-ect. Of this, 230 acres have already been acquired and compensation disbursed to farmers.

Addressing the media after reviewing the progress meet-ing at the Zilla Panchayat, Mahadevappa con-firmed the State cabinet has sanctioned Rs 101.82 crore for utility shift-ing. This follows a prolonged dis-pute with AAI, which refused to bear the cost. The State will now fully fund the work, which includes di-version of seven canals, two ditches, and rerouting high-tension lines. Completion is expected within six months.

Mysuru airport

To facilitate the runway extension, a new road will be developed, diverting traffic from the Mysuru–Nanjangud–Gundlupet–Ooty highway via Bandipalya, Hadajana, and other villages.

The minister also announced government approval for water adventure sports at Kabini backwaters, in-volving multiple departments, while rejecting a proposal for a Kaveri Arathi-style event.

On environmental matters, he directed officials to recon-duct a joint survey of deemed forest land—5,900 hectares in Mysuru district—with 5,000 hectares already surveyed.

Regarding the proposed Film City at Himmavu Industrial Area, he instructed clearance of encroachments. *—Salar News*

PHOTO: PTI

'Ladki Bahin scheme did not divert any funds'

MUMBAI, 11 JUNE

Maharashtra Minister Chandrashekhar Bawankule has dismissed allegations that funds were diverted from key departments to finance Mukhyamantri Majhi Ladki Bahin Yojana. Social Justice Minister Sanjay Shirsat earlier accused the Finance Department, led by Ajit Pawar, of reallocating over Rs 400 crore without consent. He warned such diversions undermine welfare initiatives and called them unconstitutional. Bawankule asserted that funds for Social Justice and Tribal Development are legally protected and cannot be diverted. CM Devendra Fadnavis backed by stating it falls under permissible categories of personal benefit. He accused critics of misunderstanding budgetary rules, downplaying internal rifts within Mahayuti alliance. *—PTI*

Biman accepts privilege motion against Adhikari

KOLKATA, 11 JUNE

West Bengal Assembly Speaker Biman Banerjee on Wednesday accepted a privilege motion moved by a few Trinamool Congress (TMC) MLAs against Leader of Opposition Suvendu Adhikari for allegedly making "defamatory and untrue" remarks against West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee outside the assembly premises. Biman said the motion had been forwarded to the privilege committee, which will submit its report by the next session. Assembly sources said the next session is likely to be held in September. The privilege motion, submitted to the Speaker, was in response to Adhikari's alleged statements to the media claiming that the CM, during her speech on the floor of the House, had praised Pakistan. *—PTI*

Party worker slaps UP politician after garlanding him

JAUNPUR, 11 JUNE

Mahendra Rajbhar, national president of the Suheldev Swabhiman Party, was publicly assaulted during a function in Jaunpur, Uttar Pradesh. The event, held in Ashapur village to mark Maharaja Suheldev's victory day, turned chaotic when Brijesh Rajbhar, a former party worker, garlanded Mahendra before repeatedly slapping him on stage. Mahendra has accused Uttar Pradesh Minister and Suheldev Bharatiya Samaj Party Chief Om Prakash Rajbhar of orchestrating the attack, alleging Brijesh met him days earlier. A police complaint has been filed. Samajwadi Party leader Akhilesh Yadav condemned the assault, calling it another attack on PDA and implicating BJP. *—Agencies*

Lalu Prasad celebrates 78th birthday in Patna

RJD Chief Lalu Prasad Yadav celebrated his 78th birthday on Wednesday at 10 Circular Road, Patna, the residence of former Bihar CM Rabri Devi. Surrounded by family and senior party leaders, he cut a 78-pound cake with a sword. Jubilant RJD workers gathered outside, dancing and distributing sweets. Celebrations also took place across Bihar.

PHOTO: PTI

US invites Munir to Army Day event in DC

US has to have relationship with Pakistan and India, says US Army General Kurilla

NEW DELHI/NEW YORK/ WASHINGTON, 11 JUNE

The United States has invited Pakistan's Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Syed Asim Munir to attend the US Army's 250th anniversary celebrations in Washington on June 12, reports said.

According to a CNN-News18 report citing intelligence sources, the US is expected to use this high-level military engagement to press Pakistan on countering terrorist groups operating against India.

The invitation has not been well received in Pakistan, as many have labelled him a "criminal" and are protesting his US visit. The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) is planning a protest against the Army Chief's visit to the States, it said.

The US extended the invitation in part due to Pakistan's close ties with China, which Washington sees as its rival not only in trade but also

Syed Asim Munir

PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA

across economic, technological, military, and geopolitical domains, the report said.

Pakistan's close ties with China have been a cause of concern for not only India but also the US. The deepening military, economic, and strategic cooperation between the two countries has affected the balance of power and stability in South Asia and beyond.

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has not only increased Pakistan's economic and infrastructural reliance on Beijing, but it also provides China with direct access to the Arabian Sea and a strategic alternative to the Malacca Strait. CPEC is the most developed land corridor of Belt and Road Initiative, which China launched in 2013. It involves over 140 countries in Asia, Europe, and Africa. In return, China is heavily investing in Pakistan's energy, transport, and defence sectors.

Meanwhile, the top US Army General Michael Kurilla said that, US has to have a relationship with Pakistan and with India, noting that it cannot be a "binary switch" where Washington cannot have ties with Islamabad if it has relations with New Delhi.

Former Pentagon official and senior fellow at the American Enterprise Institute, Michael Rubin urged Canada to act firmly against Khalistani extremism, including terror designations and financial crackdowns. Praising Modi's decision to attend the G7 in Canada, Rubin said India has nothing to hide and welcomed a mature, two-way law enforcement dialogue

-Michael Rubin, Former Pentagon official and Senior fellow at the American Enterprise Institute

General Kurilla, Commander of US Central Command, made the comments during a testimony before US House Armed Services Committee on Tuesday. *—PTI with Agencies*

PAKISTAN EYES GERMAN DEFENCE SYSTEM AFTER BRAHMOS' SUCCESS

PAKISTAN, 11 JUNE

Pakistan is exploring the German-made IRIS-T SLM air defence system after India's BrahMos missile reportedly outpaced Chinese-supplied HQ-9 and HQ-16 systems. IRIS-T SLM, praised for its performance in Ukraine against Russian supersonic missiles, costing around USD 200 million per unit. Despite economic hardship, Pak raised its defence budget by 18 per cent while cancelling major development projects. India, meanwhile, objects to global financial loans granted to Pakistan, citing terror financing risks. Germany maintains ties with both nations, with Diehl Defence collaborating on India's Project 75I submarines & new artillery deal. —Agencies

Govt clears two railway projects worth Rs 6,405 cr

NEW DELHI, 11 JUNE

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by the **Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi** on Wednesday, approved two projects of Ministry of Railways worth Rs 6,405 crore, with aim to improve travel convenience, reduce logistic cost, decrease oil imports and contribute to lower CO2 emissions.

The project approved by the cabinet included 133 kilometers long Koderma - Barkakana Doubling and 185kms long project Ballari - Chikjajur Doubling. The Koderma - Barkakana Doubling project passes through a major coal-producing area of

Jharkhand. Furthermore, it serves as the shortest and more efficient rail link between Patna and Ranchi.

Additonally, the Ballari-Chikjajur Doubling project traverses through Ballari and Chitradurga districts of Karnataka and Anantapur district of Andhra Pradesh.

These projects cover seven Districts across the states of Jharkhand, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh, will increase the existing network of Indian Railways by about 318 Kms. And will enhance connectivity to approx. 1,408 villages, which are having a population of about 28.19 lakh.

This addition will help transport commodities such as coal, iron ore, finished steel, cement, fertilizers, agriculture commodities, and Petroleum products etc. The capacity augmentation works will result in additional freight traffic of magnitude 49 Million Tonnes Per Annum. *—PTI*

India protests over US' 'ill-treatment' of citizen

NEW DELHI, 11 JUNE

India has raised the issue of an Indian national being handcuffed and allegedly treated like a criminal at Newark Airport with the US Embassy in New Delhi, official sources confirmed on Wednesday.

The Indian Consulate in New York has established that the man, a resident of Haryana, had entered the United States illegally without a valid visa and was being deported in accordance with a court order.

During his transit at Newark Airport, US authorities deemed his behaviour unsuitable for travel. As a result, he was restrained, handcuffed, and later admitted to a medical facility. Once declared fit to travel, he will be deported back to India, officials said.

Indian Embassy in

Washington DC and New York Consulate have been in regular contact with US authorities for full details.

Footage of the man being pinned to the ground by US officials has gone viral online. The video was recorded by Indian-American Kunal Jain, who described incident as "heartbreaking" and said he felt "helpless".

The case has sparked public concern, especially among the Indian diaspora, regarding the treatment of deportees. *—PTI*

EAM welcomes EU's support for stronger ties

BRUSSELS, 11 JUNE

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, during his visit to Belgium and Luxembourg, met leaders of the European Parliament and welcomed their support for stronger India-EU relations.

In a post on X, Jaishankar said it was a "pleasure interacting" with Members of the European Parliament Angelika Niebler, Urmas Paet, Pilar del Castillo, Vladimir Prebilič and Winkler Gyula.

He appreciated their understanding of India's right to defend itself against terrorism and noted their shared perspectives on global and regional developments.

Earlier, Jaishankar met Belgian Prime Minister Bart De Wever and also called on King Philippe, reinforcing ties between India and Belgium. He held talks with European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and commended her for strongly condemning the 22 April terror attack in Pahalgam. He welcomed the EU's solidarity in the global fight against terrorism.

Following the Pahalgam attack, on 7 May, India launched precision strikes targeting terror infrastructure in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir.

The Minister's engagements underline India's diplomatic push to strengthen strategic ties with EU, while garnering international support for its counter-terrorism stance and regional security concerns. *—PTI*

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar with Members of the European Parliament, Angelika Niebler, Urmas Paet, Winkler Gyula, Vladimir Prebili and Pilar del Castillo in Brussels **PHOTO: PTI**

Violence breaks out in WB's South 24 Parganas

KOLKATA, 11 JUNE

Tension gripped Rabindranagar near Kolkata on Wednesday following a violent clash between two groups in Maheshtala, South 24 Parganas district, leaving several police personnel injured and prompting the deployment of reinforcements.

The violence, which began on Tuesday over a dispute related to setting up a shop, escalated into a full-blown street battle. Bricks were hurled from rooftops, tyres set ablaze, and a motorbike torched in front of the Rabindranagar police station. Eyewitnesses reported stone-pelting injuring multiple officers, including a woman constable.

Police said five civilians were injured and four arrested. Several police vehicles were vandalised, and one officer was left bleeding after being struck by a brick. Reinforcements from Kolkata and the Rapid Action Force were deployed, and tear gas was used to disperse the mob.

Authorities imposed Section 163 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, enabling urgent preventive measures. Raids are ongoing.

BJP leader Suvendu Adhikari staged a protest at the West Bengal Police headquarters, demanding deployment of central forces and claiming DGP Rajiv Kumar refused to meet him. *—PTI*

- Authorities imposed Section 163 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, enabling urgent preventive measures. Raids are ongoing.

SHELTERLESS UNDER SEARING HEAT

Hundreds left homeless in Delhi's searing heatwave as authorities raze Govindpuri slum. Authorities launched a demolition drive in the Bhoomiheen camp in southeast Delhi's Govindpuri on Wednesday morning, amid heavy police deployment. 44 jhuggi constructions, were demolished after the Delhi Development Authority pasted eviction notices on camps, warning "encroachers" to leave **PHOTO: PTI**

MARGINALISED COMMUNITIES HIT

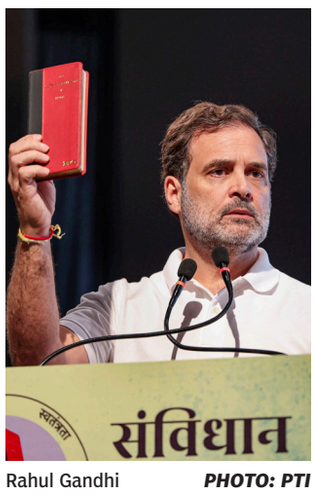
Rahul writes to PM over delayed student scholarships

NEW DELHI, 11 JUNE

Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi has written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi flagging the "deplorable" conditions in residential hostels for Dalit, ST, EBC, OBC and minority students and the delay in post-matric scholarships for those from marginalised communities.

In his letter to Modi, Gandhi urged the PM to resolve these two critical issues which he said hinder education opportunities for the 90 per cent of students who are from marginalised communities.

"Firstly, the conditions in residential hostels for students from Dalit, ST, EBC, OBC and minority communities are deplorable. During a recent visit to Ambedkar Hostel in Darbhanga, Bihar, students complained about single rooms which 6-7 students were forced to share, unhygienic toilets, unsafe drinking water, lack of mess facilities, and no access to



Rahul Gandhi **PHOTO: PTI**

libraries or the internet," the Congress leader said.

"Secondly, post-matric scholarships for students from marginalised communities are plagued by delays and failures," Gandhi said and cited the example of Bihar where he claimed the scholarship portal was non-functional for three years and no student received a scholarship in 2021-22.

Gandhi called for an audit of every hostel for students to ensure good infrastructure, sanitation, food and academic facilities; and allocate adequate funds to address deficiencies.

He also appealed for disbursement of post-matric scholarships on time, increasing scholarship amounts, and improving execution by working closely with state governments. *—PTI*

- In his letter to Modi, Gandhi urged the PM to resolve these two critical issues which he said hinder education opportunities for the 90 per cent of students who are from marginalised communities.

Cong expels Digvijaya Singh's brother Laxman from party

NEW DELHI, 11 JUNE

The Congress on Wednesday expelled former Madhya Pradesh MLA Laxman Singh from primary membership of the party for six years for "anti-party activities".

Laxman Singh is the brother of senior Congress leader and former Madhya Pradesh chief minister Digvijaya Singh.

"Congress president has expelled Laxman Singh, former MLA, Madhya Pradesh, from the primary membership of the I ndian National Congress for a period of six years with immediate effect due to his anti-party activities," Tariq Anwar, member Secretary of the Congress' Disciplinary Action Committee, said in a statement.

The statement did not elaborate based on what "anti-party activities" it had acted against Singh. The state PCC had made a recommendation to the Congress leadership for initiating action against him for his alleged anti-party activities and the matter was sent to the Disciplinary Action Committee of the AICC.

Laxman Singh **PHOTO: ANI**

- Laxman Singh is the brother of senior Congress leader and former Madhya Pradesh chief minister Digvijaya Singh. Singh has been a five-time MP and three-time MLA from Madhya Pradesh.

Singh has been a five-time MP and three-time MLA from Madhya Pradesh.

He was first elected to the state legislature in 1990.

He became an MP for the first time in 1994 from Rajgarh.

Singh switched to the BJP in 2004 when he was elected to the Lok Sabha again.

He returned to the Congress fold in 2013. *—PTI*

HC blames UP cops of apathy in abduction cases

PRAYAGRAJ, 11 JUNE

The Allahabad High Court has observed that while police officials often carve out a larger-than-life image for themselves, they shield themselves from addressing public grievances. A bench noted that the police generally exhibit apathy in abduction cases, as no personal responsibility is fixed upon the officers. The bench made the observation on 10 June while dealing with a writ petition filed by one Nitesh Kumar regarding the disappearance of his brother, who he claimed was not being traced by the police officials concerned in Varanasi. The court sought a reply from the state government in the matter and a personal affidavit from the Varanasi police commissioner. *—PTI*

PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA

Telugu singer Mangli's drug party raided

BENGALURU, 11 JUNE

The police raided popular Telugu folk singer Mangli's birthday party at the Tripura Resorts in Chevella, on the outskirts of Telangana's Hyderabad after receiving information about drugs being served to guests there.
The incident took place on 10 June, when about 50 guests, including several celebrities like Rachcha Ravi, Divi, Kasarla Shyam and singer Indravathi were present at the party.
The police recovered a huge quantity of illegal drugs, along with imported liquor. Nine guests were found to have consumed cannabis. While Mangli has also been booked for hosting the party without prior permission from the police and the excise department. The General Manager of the resort has been booked for allowing the party.
—Agencies

Delhi Zoo joins Vantara for animal care

NEW DELHI, 11 JUNE

The National Zoological Park in Delhi will collaborate with animal welfare organisation Vantara in a move aimed at improving animal care, staff training and overall management of the zoo. "This initiative aims to strengthen the zoo's operations and transform it into a more meaningful and enriching experience for the people of Delhi," Vantara CEO Vivaan Karani said.
The collaboration aims to support animal care through shared resources, scientific expertise, and modern facilities, officials said in a statement. It is designed to combine the strengths of the public institution with Vantara's specialised knowledge in animal welfare, it stated.
The agreement has drawn criticism from some quarters, with a few alleging it is a step towards privatisation. *—PTI*

British musician Passenger plans India tour

NEW DELHI, 11 JUNE

British singer-songwriter Passenger, best known for his globally hit track "Let Her Go", is set to make his India debut with a three-city tour in November, BookMyShow Live announced on Wednesday.
As part of his Asia Tour, Passenger, whose real name is Michael Rosenberg, will perform in Delhi-NCR on November 19, followed by stops in Mumbai on November 21 and Bengaluru on November 22, 2025.
The shows will be held at Delhi-NCR, Mumbai and Bengaluru. Passenger, 41, shot to global recognition with "Let Her Go", the breakout single from his 2012 album 'All The Little Lights', which topped charts in 19 countries and became the second-most searched song of all time on Shazam.
—PTI

Axiom-4 mission postponed after leak in Falcon-9

CONTINUOUS DELAYS...

The Axiom-4 mission was originally scheduled for launch on 29 May. It was first postponed to 8 June and later to 10 June.
On 10 June, the launch was postponed by a day due to bad weather in the flight path.

The mission with India's Shubhanshu has seen 2 delays in 2 days

NEW DELHI, 11 JUNE

The Axiom-4 mission, scheduled to carry Indian astronaut Shubhanshu Shukla and three others to the International Space Station on 10 May, was put off again to fix a leak in the SpaceX's Falcon-9 rocket.

SpaceX announced that it was "standing down" from the Falcon-9 launch to allow time for repairs after a post-static inspection of the rocket's boosters identified a liquid oxygen leak.

"Once complete and pending Range availability, we will share a new launch date," SpaceX said.

Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) chairman, V Narayanan said the liquid oxygen leak was detected in the propulsion bay during a hot test on the launch pad. The hot test validated the performance of the booster stage of Falcon-9 launch vehicle.

Hence, the Axiom-4 launch to send the first Indian Gaganyatri to the International Space Station stands postponed, the ISRO chairman said.

Axiom Space spokesperson said that during the post-static fire investigation of the Falcon-9 booster that supports the Axiom-4 mission, SpaceX teams identified a liquid oxygen leak that requires additional work.

Commander Peggy Whitson, pilot Shukla and specialists Tigor Kapu of Hungary and Slawosz Uznanski-Wisniewski of Poland were slated to embark up on the 14-day mission that will "realise the return" to human spaceflight for India, Poland and Hungary.

The Axiom-4 mission, originally scheduled for launch on 29 May, was first postponed to 8 June and again to 10 June due to bad weather in the flight path.

SpaceX vice president, William Gerstenmaier said that engineers had fixed some snags in the Falcon-9 rocket that were discovered during the static fire test and had gone unnoticed during the post-flight refurbishment of boosters. *—PTI*

HONEYMOON HORROR

Sonam, 'hitmen' remanded to 8 days police custody

BENGALURU, 11 JUNE

Uma Raghuvanshi, mother of Raja Raghuvanshi, the Indore man who was allegedly murdered during his honeymoon in Meghalaya
PHOTO: PTI

Meghalaya deputy chief minister Prestone Tynsong said some of the accused in the Indore businessman Raja Raghuvanshi's murder case have already confessed killing him with his wife Sonam's cooperation.

Tynsong said that all the accused have been arrested from different places. The Meghalaya police were sure of her involvement in the crime.

Meanwhile, the four accused -Akash Rajput, Vishal Singh Chauhan, Raj Singh Kushwaha and Anand Kurmi have confessed to the crime.

The accused also revealed that Sonam was present when her husband was being killed. Sonam reportedly had even planned to push Raja off a mountain herself if the hitmen failed.

The accused were brought to Shillong on Wednesday. Sonam is currently lodged at the Shillong Sadar Police Station. They have been remanded to eight days in police custody.

Kushwaha planned the murder with the others in Indore.The other three left for Meghalaya with ₹50,000 and a mobile phone provided by Kushwaha, who stayed back. Kushwaha mother claimed that her son was being "trapped" and could not murder anyone.

On 28 May, Sonam was arrested from Uttar Pradesh's Ghazipur. Meanwhile, Sonam's mother, Sangeeta claimed that her daughter was being falsely accused. *—PTI*

Red alert for heatwave in Delhi as North India sizzles

NEW DELHI, 11 JUNE

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has issued a red alert for Delhi as the city grapples with an intense heatwave, with maximum temperatures soaring to 45.5 degrees Celsius in several areas.

The alert on Wednesday comes amid a forecast of continuing extreme conditions over the next two days. The IMD forecast partly cloudy skies for 12 June and 13 with dust-raising winds during thunderstorms.

Heatwave conditions are likely to prevail at many places across Delhi-NCR, with temperatures ranging between 44 degrees Celsius and 46 degrees Celsius.

Humidity levels in the capital remained moderate at 39 per cent, but heat combined with dry south-westerly winds worsened the discomfort.

The severe heat across northwest India, including Delhi, Punjab, Haryana, and Rajasthan, will persist till June 12.

The city reported poor air quality, with an AQI of 225 at 2pm. Authorities have urged citizens to take precautionary measures, particularly children, the elderly and those with pre-existing health conditions.

Temperatures are expected to dip slightly after 14 June with possible light to moderate showers bringing some respite from the scorching heat. *– PTI*

Boys bath in a tubewell for relief from the scorching heat, in New Delhi
PHOTO: PTI

'Judicial activism must not turn into judicial terrorism'

LONDON, 11 JUNE

Chief Justice of India (CJI) BR Gavai described the Constitution as a "quiet revolution etched in ink" and a transformative force that not only guarantees rights but actively uplifts the historically oppressed. He was speaking at the Oxford Union on the theme 'From Representation to Realisation: Embodying the Constitution's Promise'.

He also cautioned against straying into what he called "judicial terrorism" from "judicial activism".

While addressing the event Gavai said that the judiciary is duty-bound to take action when the legislature or executive is not able to safeguard citizens' rights,

He reflected upon his own journey from a municipal school to the highest judicial office of the country to highlight the impact of the 'legal charter' now in its 75th year.

He delved into BR Ambedkar's role as the chairman of the Drafting Committee for his "foresighted and defining role" in embedding adequate safeguards and affirmative measures into the Constitution.

"The Constitution is a social document that that takes notice of the brutal truths of caste, poverty, exclusion, and injustice. It is aware that all are equal in a land scarred by deep inequality. It intervenes to rewrite the script, to recalibrate power, and to restore dignity," he stated. *—PTI*

SC trashes convicts' plea in minor's rape

The Supreme Court has dismissed the appeal of two convicts challenging the life imprisonment handed down by lower courts for kidnapping and raping a 13-year-old girl in 2019. The bench rejected convicts Sanjay Paikra and Pustam Yadav's appeal against the Chhattisgarh High Court verdict. "No indulgence is needed from us. Dismissed," the bench said. —PTI

Manipur man fires at security, held

IMPHAL, 11 JUNE

A member of the Meitei outfit Arambai Tenggol was apprehended for allegedly firing at security personnel during the recent protests in Manipur over the arrests of a leader of the organisation and four others, police said on Wednesday.

Nineteen others were also detained for their alleged involvement in violence during demonstrations in Imphal, a senior officer said.

The Arambai Tenggol member was arrested on Tuesday as he was accused of firing at security personnel when they were trying to clear a roadblock in Tera Sapam area in Imphal West district on June 9, the officer said.

"The assailant, an Arambai Tenggol cadre, namely Raj @ Boinao Pangeijam (39), was arrested by Manipur Police along with the weapon of offence (pistol)," the police said, adding that he was produced before a magistrate and has been remanded to police custody for eight days.

"Protesters, belonging to Arambai Tenggol, attacked security forces while they were trying to clear the roadblock at Tera Sapam, in Imphal West district. One of the protesters opened fire on the troops there and fled the spot," the officer said.

The police also detained 19 people for their involvement in "street violence in Imphal East district", he said. *—PTI*

Security personnel keep a vigil amid ongoing protests, in Imphal, Manipur
PHOTO: PTI

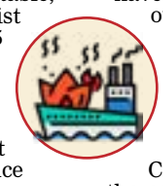
- Nineteen others were also detained for their alleged involvement in violence during demonstrations in Imphal, a senior officer said. The Arambai Tenggol member was arrested on Tuesday as he was accused of firing at security personnel.

40% of fire on Singapore ship contained

KOCHI, 11 JUNE

A major fire that broke out on the Singapore-flagged container ship MV Wan Hai 503 has been largely contained, though not fully extinguished.

The vessel, currently stable, has developed a slight list of approximately 10 to 15 degrees to the port side. Rainfall complicated firefighting efforts.



The Indian Coast Guard's Dornier aircraft continued its surveillance and assessment mission.

The fire erupted on 9 May following an explosion in one of the containers on board. The incident occurred roughly 44 nautical miles off the coast of Azhikkal in Kerala's Kannur district.

18 crew members were rescued. Search operations are underway to trace another four crew members.

FIR filed as Liberian cargo ship sinks off Kerala

Meanwhile, Kerala Police have filed an FIR against the owner, master, and crew of the Liberian cargo vessel MSC Elsa 3, which sank off the Alappuzha coast on 24 May.

The Fort Kochi Coastal Police registered the case, citing rash navigation and negligent handling of hazardous materials.

The FIR stated that the ship was managed recklessly, causing it to sink and resulting in hazardous cargo spilling into the sea. *—PTI*

Kerala woman, child killed in accident in Kenya

PALAKKAD, 11 JUNE

A Palakkad-based woman and her daughter, who were among the five Keralites feared dead in a road accident in Kenya, were expected to reach Kerala for vacation on June 28, her father said on Wednesday.

The woman's family, settled in Qatar, had planned to spend their children's summer vacation in Kerala.

"We were waiting for them to come when this tragedy occurred," her father said.

A bus carrying 28 Indians met with the accident on 9 June in Nyandarua.

Five Keralites were feared dead, though the Indian High Commission in Nairobi is yet to confirm their identities.

The victim's husband, Joel and son were undergoing treatment at a Nairobi hospital and her brother reached there on 10 June from Dubai.

The bodies will be first brought to the woman's house here and then taken to her husband's place in Tamil Nadu's Coimbatore for the last rites. *—PTI*

The vehicle carrying the Indians killed in accident in Kenya -X

24 HOURS BEFORE JOURNEY

Wait list tickets to be confirmed in a day?

NEW DELHI, 11 JUNE

A trial was launched in which the confirmed status of waiting list passengers was announced 24 hours before a train's departure, instead of the current practice of notifying passengers just four hours before, the Railway Ministry said on Wednesday.

Ministry officials assured that the pilot project would become part of the policy only after receiving a positive response from the passengers.

"We have started this pilot project in the Bikaner Division, where charts are being prepared 24 hours before the train departure. The current practice is doing so before four hours," Dilip Kumar, executive director, information and publicity, Railway Board, said.

This trial was being done keeping in mind the concerns of passengers who remain uncertain about their journey due to a waiting ticket.

"Now, if they know 24 hours before that their tickets are confirmed, they can plan their travel better," he added.

However, once a ticket is confirmed, passengers will lose a substantial chunk of the ticket amount as penalty in case of cancellation.

According to the cancellation policy, if a confirmed ticket is cancelled between 48 hours and 12 hours before departure, passengers will receive 25 per cent of the ticket amount back.

If cancelled between 12 hours and 4 hours before departure, they will receive only 50 per cent.

"Seats or berths falling vacant due to cancellation will be filled up through the current booking system," officials said. *—PTI*

PHOTO: GEMINI AI

PURI JAGANNATH FESTIVAL

Lakhs of devotees gathered to witness Lord Jagannath's ceremonial bathing rituals, held in an open pandal on the premises of the 12th-century temple in Puri on Wednesday. On the occasion, three deities - Lord Jagannath, Lord Balabhadra and Devi Subhadra — are brought to the 'Snana Mandap' (bathing altar) with ceremonial 'pahandi' (procession). The festival is also considered as the birthday of Lord Jagannath
PHOTO: PTI

Protests over immigration raids emerge across US

Protests that sprang up in Los Angeles over immigration enforcement raids and prompted President Donald Trump to mobilise National Guard troops and Marines have begun to spread across the country, with more planned into the weekend.

From Seattle and Austin to Chicago and Washington, DC, marchers have chanted slogans, carried signs against the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agency and snarled traffic through downtown avenues and outside federal offices. While many have been peaceful, some have resulted in clashes with law enforcement as officers made arrests and used chemical irritants to disperse crowds.

The Trump administration said it would continue its programme of raids and deportations despite the protests.

A look at some protests across the country:

While many protests have been peaceful, some have resulted in clashes with law enforcement as officers made arrests and used chemical irritants to disperse crowds
PHOTO: FREEPIK

San Francisco
About 200 protesters gathered outside the San Francisco Immigration Court on Tuesday after activists said several arrests were made there.

That gathering came after protests on Sunday and Monday swelled to several thousand demonstrators and saw more than 150 arrests with outbreaks of violence that included vandalised buildings, and damaged cars, police vehicles and buses.

Seattle
About 50 people gathered outside the immigration court in downtown Seattle on Tuesday, chanting with drums and holding up signs that said, "Free Them All; Abolish ICE" and "No to Deportations." Protesters began putting scooters in front of building entryways before police arrived.

Mathieu Chabaud, with Students for a Democratic Society at the University of Washington, said they were there in solidarity with the Los Angeles protesters, "and to show that we're opposed to ICE in our community."

New York City
A mass of people rallied in lower Manhattan on Tuesday evening to protest deportations and federal immigration policy.

Demonstrators gathered outside two federal buildings that house immigration courts and began marching amid a heavy police presence. Some protesters held signs reading "ICE out of New York" and others chanted, "Why are you in riot gear? I don't see no riot here."

Chicago
In Chicago, a small crowd gathered on Tuesday outside immigration court in downtown and called for an end to Trump administration immigration sweeps and military presence in California.

The group then marched through downtown streets drumming and chanting, "No more deportations!"

Denver
A group of protesters gathered in front of the Colorado state capitol in Denver on Tuesday, creating a sea of cardboard signs, one exhorting: "Show your faces. ICE cowards."

Santa Ana
In Santa Ana near Los Angeles, armoured vehicles blocked the road on Tuesday morning leading into the Civic Centre, where federal immigration officers and numerous city and county agencies have their offices.

Workers swept up plastic bottles and broken glass from Monday's protests. Tiny shards of red, black and purple glass littered the pavement. Nearby buildings and the sidewalk were tagged with profane graffiti slogans against ICE and had Trump's name crossed out. A worker rolled paint over graffiti on a wall to block it out.

Austin
Four Austin police officers were injured and authorities used chemical irritants to disperse a crowd of several hundred demonstrators Monday night that moved between the state Capitol and a federal building that houses an ICE office. Austin police used pepper spray balls and state police used tear gas when demonstrators began trying to deface the federal building with spray paint. Three officers were injured by "very large" rocks and another was injured while making an arrest, she said.

Dallas
A protest that drew hundreds to a rally on a city bridge lasted for several hours on Monday night before Dallas police declared it an "unlawful assembly" and warned people to leave or face possible arrest.

Dallas police initially posted on social media that officers would not interfere with a "lawful and peaceful assembly of individuals or groups expressing their First Amendment rights."

Boston
Hundreds of people gathered in Boston's City Hall Plaza on Monday to protest the detainment of union leader David Huerta Friday during immigration raids in Los Angeles.

Protesters held signs reading "Massachusetts stands with our neighbours in Los Angeles" and "Protect our immigrant neighbours," and shouted, "Come for one, come for all" and "Free David, free them all."

Washington, DC
Several unions gathered on Monday in Washington to protest the raids and rally for Huerta's release, and marched past the Department of Justice building.

Among the demonstrators was US Rep Pramila Jayapal, a Democrat from Washington state. *—PTI*

LETTERS write to us at salarenglishdigital@gmail.com

SALAR سالار

Should children get measles vaccine earlier?

Measles has been rising globally in recent years. There were an estimated 10.3 million cases worldwide in 2023, a 20 per cent increase from 2022.

Outbreaks are being reported all over the world including in the United States, Europe and the Western Pacific region. For example, Vietnam has reportedly seen thousands of cases in 2024 and 2025.

In Australia, 77 cases of measles have been recorded in the first five months of 2025, compared with 57 cases in all of 2024.

Measles cases in Australia are almost all related to international travel. They occur in travellers returning from overseas, or are contracted locally after mixing with an infected traveller or their contacts.

Measles most commonly affects children and is preventable with vaccination, given in Australia in two doses at 12 and 18 months old. But in light of current outbreaks globally, is there a case for reviewing the timing of measles vaccinations?

Measles is caused by a virus belonging to the genus Morbillivirus.

Symptoms include a fever, cough, runny nose and a rash. While it presents as a mild illness in most cases, measles can lead to severe disease requiring hospitalisation, and even death. Large outbreaks can overwhelm health systems.

Measles can have serious health consequences, such as in the brain and the immune system, years after the infection.

Measles spreads from person to person via small respiratory droplets that can remain suspended in the air for two hours. It's highly contagious – one person with measles can spread the infection to 12–18 people who aren't immune.

Because measles is so infectious, the World Health Organization (WHO) recommends two-dose vaccination coverage above 95 per cent to stop the spread and achieve "herd immunity".

Low and declining vaccine coverage, especially since the COVID pandemic, is driving global outbreaks.

Newborn babies are generally protected against measles thanks to maternal antibodies. Maternal antibodies get passed from the mother to the baby via the placenta and in breast milk, and provide protection against infections including measles.

The WHO advises everyone should receive two doses of measles vaccination. In places where there's a lot of measles circulating, children are generally recommended to have the first dose at around nine months old. This is because it's expected maternal antibodies would have declined significantly in most infants by that age, leaving them vulnerable to infection.

If maternal measles antibodies are still present, the vaccine is less likely to produce an immune response.

Research has also shown a measles vaccine given at less than 8.5 months of age can result in an antibody response which declines more quickly. This might be due to interference with maternal antibodies, but researchers are still trying to understand the reasons for this.

A second dose of the vaccine is usually given 6–9 months later. A second dose is important because about 10–15 per cent of children don't develop antibodies after the first vaccine.

In settings where measles transmission is under better control, a first dose is recommended at 12 months of age. Vaccination at 12 months compared with nine months is considered to generate a stronger, longer-lasting immune response.

In Australia, children are routinely given the measles-mumps- rubella (MMR) vaccine at 12 months and the measles-mumps-rubella-varicella vaccine at 18 months.

Babies at higher risk of catching the disease can also be given an additional early dose. In Australia, this is recommended for infants as young as six months when there's an outbreak or if they're travelling overseas to a high-risk setting.

The researchers found that while 81 per cent of newborns had maternal antibodies to measles, only 30 per cent of babies aged four months had maternal antibodies.

This study suggests maternal antibodies to measles decline much earlier than previously thought. It raises the question of whether the first dose of measles vaccine is given too late to maximise infants' protection, especially when there's a lot of measles around.

All of the data in this study comes from low- and middle-income countries, and might not reflect the situation in Australia where we have much higher vaccine coverage for measles, and very few cases.

Australia's coverage for two doses of the MMR vaccine at age two is above 92 per cent.

Although this is lower than the optimal 95 per cent, the overall risk of measles surging in Australia is relatively low. Nonetheless, there may be a case for broadening the age at which an early extra dose of measles vaccine can be given to children at higher risk.

In New Zealand, infants as young as four months can receive a measles vaccine before travelling to an endemic country. But the current routine immunisation schedule in Australia is unlikely to change.

Adding an extra dose to the schedule would be costly and logistically difficult.

In the meantime, ensuring high levels of measles vaccine coverage with two doses is a global priority. *—PTI*

Measles most commonly affects children and is preventable with vaccination, given in Australia in two doses at 12 and 18 months old
PHOTO: FREEPIK

Bhutia accuses football federation of destroying sports system

Outraged by India's plummeting fortunes on the football field, talismanic former captain Bhaichung Bhutia has accused the national federation of destroying the sport while some other stakeholders have lambasted the current system as "rotten" and riddled with "fragile egos".

Bhutia's scathing attack on the All India Football Federation (AIFF) and its President Kalyan Chaubey came a day after the team collapsed to a stunning 0-1 loss to a lower-ranked Hong Kong in the third round of the AFC Asian Cup qualifiers.

"It's very painful to see... we are definitely struggling now to even qualify for the Asia Cup, which we've been qualifying for regularly," Bhutia told PTI.

The loss on Tuesday left India's hopes of qualifying for the 2027 Asian Cup hanging by a thread -- a stark contrast to their recent back-to-back appearances at the continental showpiece.

Visibly anguished, the former India captain called for Chaubey's resignation and demanded a structural overhaul of Indian football, describing the on-field disasters and off-field chaos as symptoms of a deeper rot.

Current India head coach Manolo Marquez, who is also the coach of Indian Super League side FC Goa, took over from Croatian legend Igor Stimac in July last year. Stimac was sacked after a string of disappointing results, including a loss to Afghanistan in a World Cup qualifier in Guwahati.

Marquez hasn't been able to arrest the slide either and the team has logged just one win in its last eight matches. It is being widely speculated that he does not wish to continue in the position.

India had trained for nearly three weeks in Kolkata ahead of the crucial match on Tuesday, only to be outclassed by a team ranked 26 notches below them.

The latest defeat is expected to push the country down to 133 in the FIFA rankings.

Bhutia, who was defeated by Chaubey in the AIFF presidential election in September 2022, did not mince words while calling out the current leadership, alleging mismanagement, corruption, and bypassing of key footballing committees in major decisions, including the appointment of Marquez.

"Kalyan Chaubey has destroyed Indian football. Chaubey has to resign and leave. He has completely destroyed it. Three General Secretaries in two-and-a-half years -- the entire structure, the system will have to be changed," he said.

Former Indian football captain Bhaichung Bhutia
PHOTO: ANI

"Controversy after controversy, corruption charge... even after months now we don't know who the I-League winner is," he added, referring to the ongoing legal tussle between Inter Kashi and Churchill Brothers for the championship.

He accused Chaubey of bypassing the Technical Committee to appoint Marquez and criticised the decision to let the Spaniard simultaneously coach both FC Goa and the national team. Bhutia also criticised the decision to bring talismanic striker Sunil Chhetri out of international retirement, saying it was a poor call driven more by desperation than planning.

"It was nice of him to come out of retirement, but it was a completely bad decision. Manolo should not have requested, and now we hear the Federation pushed for it. But what's changed?" he asked. Bhutia also ridiculed AIFF's decision to offer a USD 50,000 match bonus instead of a qualification-linked reward for the Hong Kong game.

Former India international Goutam Sarkar echoed Bhutia's sentiments, expressing frustration at the team's stagnation and the federation's failings. Legendary defender and coach Subrata Bhattacharya slammed the obsession with foreign coaches and called for more faith in Indian talent.

Two of Indian football's key club stakeholders -- Bengaluru FC owner Parth Jindal and FC Goa CEO Ravi Puskur -- also launched a scathing attack on the AIFF and the broader footballing ecosystem, calling for deep introspection and structural reform in the wake of the humiliating defeat. Bengaluru FC owner Parth Jindal also lashed out at the AIFF on social media, calling for urgent course correction. *—PTI*

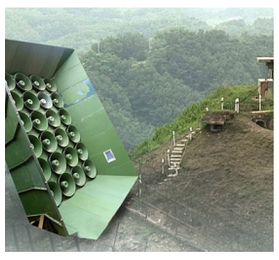


PHOTO: X

South Korea halts broadcasts near North Korea

SEOUL, 11 JUNE

South Korea has stopped loudspeaker broadcasts of anti-North propaganda along the border, marking the first tangible step by new liberal President Lee Jae-myung to reduce tensions with Pyongyang. The broadcasts, resumed last year in retaliation for North Korea's balloon campaign that dropped trash, including manure, into the South, were a key part of Cold War-style psychological warfare. Seoul's Defence Ministry said the move aims to "restore trust" and promote peace. Pyongyang has yet to respond. Lee, who took office last week after conservative Yoon Suk Yeol was ousted, pledged to reopen dialogue with the North. However, prospects remain uncertain, as North Korea deepens ties with Russia and maintains hostility toward the South following collapsed nuclear talks. *—PTI*

Alabama executes man with nitrogen gas for '88 murder

ATMORE, 11 JUNE

Alabama executed Gregory Hunt on Tuesday evening using nitrogen gas, marking the sixth such execution in the US. Hunt, 64, was convicted of capital murder for the 1988 killing of 32-year-old Karen Lane in her Cordova apartment. Prosecutors said Hunt, enraged by jealousy after a brief relationship, broke in, sexually assaulted, and fatally beat Lane, leaving 60 injuries. He was sentenced to death in 1990. Hunt, one of Alabama's longest-serving death row inmates, had chosen nitrogen gas over lethal injection or the electric chair. He told AP last month that he had found religion in prison and tried to help fellow inmates. His final appeal, claiming prosecutorial misconduct, was rejected by the US Supreme Court. *—PTI*

Colombian teen charged with murder plot

BOGOTÁ, 11 JUNE

Colombian authorities have charged a 15-year-old boy with attempted murder following the shooting of conservative presidential candidate Miguel Uribe during a campaign rally in Bogotá. Uribe, 39, was shot in the head in the Modelia neighbourhood and remains in critical condition. The teenager, captured while fleeing the scene with a gun, pleaded not guilty and is recovering from leg wounds. He will be held in a juvenile detention centre once discharged from hospital, facing a maximum sentence of eight years. Authorities are investigating who orchestrated the attack. Armed groups in Colombia often recruit minors for violent crimes due to lenient legal penalties. *—PTI*

Floods, snow kill at least 49 in South Africa

CAPE TOWN, 11 JUNE

At least 49 people have died in South Africa after heavy rain and snow battered the Eastern Cape and neighbouring provinces, officials said Tuesday. A minibus carrying schoolchildren was swept away near Mthatha, with several children still missing. Three were rescued after clinging to trees. Six deaths occurred in Mthatha due to flooding, while a seventh body was recovered near Tsolo. Separately, five people were killed in a car crash when a minibus taxi overturned while avoiding a fallen tree. Disaster teams are active across Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal, where parts of a major highway were closed due to snow. Authorities had warned of a strong cold front ahead of the extreme weather. *—PTI*

Went too far: Musk sorry for Trump dig

Trump says he has no desire to repair ties

WASHINGTON, 11 JUNE

Tech billionaire Elon Musk has expressed regret over his recent remarks about US President Donald Trump, stating that some of his posts last week "went too far".

Taking to his official handle on X (formerly Twitter), Musk posted, "I regret some of my posts about Presi-dent @realDonaldTrump last week. They went too far."

Meanwhile, Trump warned Musk of "serious consequences" if he funds Democratic candidates running against Republicans backing the GOP's budget bill, escalating tensions between the two influential figures.

Speaking to NBC News in a phone interview on Saturday, Trump said, "If he does, he'll have to pay the con-sequences for that. He'll have to pay very serious consequences if he does that." However, he refused to elaborate on what those consequences might be.

Trump further clarified he had no desire to repair ties with Musk after their public fallout. When asked whether he wished to reconnect with Musk, Trump responded, "No." When asked if his relationship with Musk was over, Trump replied, "I would assume so, yeah."

Trump made it clear he had no plans to speak with Musk anytime soon, stating, "I'm too busy doing other things," and added, "I have no intention of speaking to him," NBC News reported.

He accused Musk of being "disrespectful to the office of the President," saying, "I think it's a very bad thing, because he's very disrespectful. You could not disrespect the office of the President."

Musk had targeted Trump in a series of posts on X on Thursday, including a now-deleted post, where he referenced Trump's past association with late sex offender Jeffrey Epstein. *—ANI*

Trump has made it clear that he had no plans to speak with Musk anytime soon PHOTO: X

LA police enforce curfew, mass arrest of protesters

LOS ANGELES, 11 JUNE

Los Angeles police made arrests after a curfew took effect in part of the United States's second-largest city amid continuing protests against President Donald Trump's immigration crackdown.

Los Angeles police deployed officers on horseback and used crowd control projectiles to break up a group of hundreds demonstrating against immigration crackdown.

Hours later, many of the protesters dispersed, although sporadic confrontations continued. Officials said the curfew was necessary to stop vandalism and theft by agitators looking to cause trouble.

Democratic Gov Gavin Newsom earlier accused Trump of drawing a "military dragnet" across the nation's second-largest city with his escalating use of the National Guard.

Newsom asked a court to put an emergency stop to the military helping federal immigration agents, with some guardsmen now standing in protection around agents as they carried out arrests. He said it would only heighten tensions and promote civil unrest. The judge set a hearing for Thursday, giving the administration several days to continue those activities.

The change moves troops closer to engaging in law enforcement actions like deportations as Trump has promised as part of his administration's immigration crackdown. The Guard has the authority to temporarily detain people who attack officers but any arrests ultimately would be made by law enforcement.

President Trump called protesters in Los Angeles "animals" and "a foreign enemy" in a speech at Fort Bragg on Tuesday. *—PTI*

A protester being arrested by California HIghway Patrol near the federal building in downtown Los Angeles on Tuesday PHOTO: PTI

> **California may be first, but it clearly will not end here. Other states are next...Democracy is next. Democracy is under assault before our eyes. This moment we have feared has arrived**
>
> — Gavin Newsom, Governor of California

WORLD'S MOST POPULAR TIKTOKER KHABY LEAVES US AFTER BEING DETAINED BY ICE

LAS VEGAS, 11 JUNE

Khaby Lame, a popular TikTok personality with millions of followers, has left the US after being detained by immigration agents in Las Vegas for allegedly overstaying his visa.

The Senegalese-Italian influencer, whose legal name is Seringe Khabane Lame, was detained on Friday but was allowed to leave without a deportation order, the US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) confirmed in a statement.

Lame arrived in the US on 30 April and "overstayed the terms of his visa," the ICE spokesperson said. His detainment and departure from the US comes amid President Trump's escalating crackdown on immigration. *—PTI*

TRADE DEAL DONE

US gets China's rare earth minerals, tariffs on goods go to 55%

WASHINGTON, 11 JUNE

- In return, US President Donald Trump said his country will provide China "what was agreed to," including allowing Chinese students to attend American colleges and universities

President Donald Trump announced Wednesday that the United States will get magnets and rare earth minerals from China under a new trade deal and that tariffs on Chinese goods will go to 55 per cent.

In return, Trump said the US will provide China "what was agreed to," including allowing Chinese students to attend American colleges and universities.

Several global brands are at risk of using forced labour through their Chinese supply chains because they use critical minerals or buy minerals-based products sourced from the far-western Xinjiang region of China, an international rights group said Wednesday.

The report by the Netherlands-based Global Rights Compliance says companies including Avon, Walmart, Nescafe, Coca-Cola and paint supplier Sherwin-Williams may be linked to titanium sourced from Xinjiang, where rights groups allege the Chinese government runs coercive labour practices targeting predominantly Muslim Uyghurs and other Turkic minorities.

The report found 77 Chinese suppliers in the titanium, lithium, beryllium and magnesium industries oper-ating in Xinjiang. It said the suppliers are at risk of participating in the Chinese government's "labour trans-fer programmes," in which Uyghurs are forced to work in factories as part of a long-standing campaign of assimilation and mass detention.

Commercial paints, thermos cups and components for the aerospace, auto and defence industries are among products sold internationally that can trace their supply chains to minerals from Xinjiang, the report said.

The report came as China and the US, the world's two largest economies, said that they have agreed on a framework to get their trade negotiations back on track after a series of disputes that threatened to derail them.

The two sides on Tuesday wrapped up two days of talks in London that appeared to focus on finding a way to resolve disputes over mineral and technology exports that had shaken a fragile truce on trade reached in Geneva last month. *—PTI*

RUSSIA RETURNS 1,212 BODIES OF UKRAINIANS

KYIV, 11 JUNE

Russia on Wednesday returned 1,212 bodies of Ukrainian servicemen killed during the fighting on the eastern front and received 27 bodies in exchange.

Meanwhile, Russian forces also launched a fresh drone assault across Ukraine overnight Wednesday, killing three people and wounding 60 more, Ukrainian officials said.

One of the hardest-hit areas was the city of Kharkiv in northeastern Ukraine, where 17 attack drones struck two residential districts, said Mayor Ihor Terekhov. Emergency crews, municipal workers and volunteers worked through the night to extinguish fires, rescue residents from burning homes, and restore gas, electricity and water services.

"Those are ordinary sites of peaceful life — those that should never be targeted," Terekhov wrote on Telegram.

Three people were confirmed killed and at least 60 injured, including nine children aged between 2 and 15, according to Kharkiv regional head Oleh Syniehubov.

Moscow deployed high numbers of drones and missiles in recent days. *—PTI*

36 Palestinians killed in Gaza

DEIR AL-BALAH, 11 JUNE

Palestinians desperately trying to access aid in Gaza came under fire again on Tuesday, killing 36 people and wounding 207, the Palestinian Health Ministry said.

Experts and humanitarian aid workers say Israel's blockade and 20-month military campaign have pushed Gaza to the brink of famine.

At least 163 people have been killed and 1,495 wounded in a number of shootings near aid sites run by the Israeli and US-backed Gaza Humanitarian Foundation, which are in military zones that are off-limits to independent media. The Israeli military has acknowledged firing warning shots on previous occasions at people who it says approached its forces in a suspicious manner.

The foundation says there has been no violence in or around the distribution points themselves. But it has warned people to stay on designated access routes and it paused delivery last week while it held talks with the military on improving safety. *—PTI*

Palestinians line up to receive donated food at a community kitchen in Gaza City on Tuesday PHOTO: PTI

Polish PM survives vote of confidence

WARSAW, 11 JUNE

- Lawmakers voted 243-210 in favour of the government in the 460-seat Sejm, the lower house, with supporters rising to applaud Tusk and chant his name. There were no abstentions.

The Polish government survived a vote of confidence in parliament on Wednesday, as Prime Minister Donald Tusk sought to reassert his authority after the defeat of a key ally in the recent presidential election.

Lawmakers voted 243-210 in favour of the government in the 460-seat Sejm, the lower house, with supporters rising to applaud Tusk and chant his name. There were no abstentions.

Tusk requested the vote, saying Poland is in a new reality and that he was seeking a fresh opening, following the 1 June loss of Warsaw Mayor Rafal Trzaskowski — his close ally — to nationalist historian Karol Nawrocki.

Backed by US President Donald Trump, Nawrocki is set to replace outgoing President Andrzej Duda, another conservative who repeatedly blocked Tusk's reform efforts.

Most of the power in Poland's parliamentary system rests with an elected parliament and a government chosen by the parliament. However, the president can veto legislation and represents the country abroad.

Tusk had long counted on a Trzaskowski victory to break the institutional deadlock created by Duda's vetoes. Instead, he now faces an incoming president aligned with the nationalist opposition and openly hostile to his government's legislative priorities.

There are questions about what Tusk can achieve before the next parliamentary election, scheduled for 2027, and whether the coalition will even survive that long amid a surge in popularity for the far right. *—PTI*

Pak man extradited from Canada to US over plot on Jews

NEW YORK, 11 JUNE

A Pakistani citizen living in Canada has been extradited to the US for allegedly plotting an ISIS-inspired mass shooting at a Jewish centre in New York City, timed to the first anniversary of the October 7 Hamas attacks in Israel.

Muhammad Shahzeb Khan, 20, also known as Shahzeb Jadoon, was extradited Tuesday and will appear in court in the Southern District of New York. US officials said Khan planned to use automatic weapons to kill as many members of the Jewish community as possible in support of ISIS. *—PTI*

MALPRACTICE IN CHINA

Nescafé, Coca-Cola accused of using forced labour

LONDON, 11 JUNE

Global brands including Avon, Walmart, Nescafé, Coca-Cola and Sherwin-Williams may be at risk of exposure to forced labour through supply chains tied to China's Xinjiang region, according to a report released Wednesday by Global Rights Compliance.

The Netherlands-based rights group said dozens of international companies source critical minerals—such as titanium, lithium, beryllium, and magnesium—from Xinjiang, where the Chinese government is accused of coercive labour practices targeting Uyghurs and other Turkic minorities.

The report identified 77 Chinese suppliers in the region involved in labour transfer programmes—schemes widely alleged to include forced work under state assimilation efforts. The affected minerals are used in everyday products such as commercial paints, thermos cups, and components for the auto, defence, and aerospace industries.

"Mining and processing in Xinjiang rely in part on the state's forced labour programmes for Uyghurs," the report stated, urging companies to audit their supply chains.

The implicated companies did not immediately respond to the findings.

A 2022 UN report said China may have committed crimes against humanity in Xinjiang, where over 1 million Uyghurs have allegedly been detained. Beijing rejects the allegations, claiming its actions are aimed at counter-terrorism and regional stability.

The US has passed laws banning imports from Xinjiang unless proven free of forced labour, with recent enforcement expanding beyond textiles to minerals and seafood.

China remains the global leader in refining and processing minerals like lithium and beryllium, much of it extracted from Xinjiang, according to the rights group. *—PTI*

The report identified 77 Chinese suppliers in the region involved in labour transfer programmes PHOTO: X

Austria mourns victims of school shooting

GRAZ, 11 JUNE

Austria observed a national minute of silence on Wednesday to honour the 10 victims of a deadly school shooting in Graz, the country's worst post-war attack. The 21-year-old gunman, a former student of the BORG Dreierschützengasse high school, took his own life after the rampage.

A farewell letter and a non-functional pipe bomb were found at his home. While the letter said goodbye to his parents, investigators said it revealed no motive. "No motive can be inferred," said Franz Ruf, public security director at Austria's Interior Ministry.

The attacker had not completed his studies at the school and used legally owned weapons—a shotgun and a handgun. Authorities are still investigating whether the victims were targeted or randomly selected. *—PTI*

People light candles in the city center after the shooting in Graz, Austria PHOTO: PTI

PHOTO: FREEPIK

Gold jumps Rs 820 to Rs 98,490/10g

NEW DELHI, 11 JUNE

Gold prices jumped Rs 820 to Rs 98,490 per 10g in the national capital on Wednesday due to fresh buying by retailers and stockists in line with firm global trends, according to the All India Sarafa Association. The precious metal of 99.5 per cent purity appreciated by Rs 750 to Rs 98,000 per 10g (inclusive of all taxes). However, silver prices traded flat at Rs 1,07,100 per kilogram (inclusive of all taxes) on Wednesday. Meanwhile, spot gold in the international markets rose by USD 12.09 per ounce or 0.36 per cent to USD 3,334.69 per ounce. However, spot silver fell 0.5 per cent to trade at USD 36.34 per ounce in the global markets *—PTI*

Rupee rises 6P to settle at 85.51 against USD

MUMBAI, 11 JUNE

The rupee appreciated 6 paise to close at 85.51 (provisional) against the US dollar on Wednesday, supported by strong foreign fund inflows and a weak American currency against major rivals overseas. However, investors stayed on the sidelines ahead of the CPI data release on Thursday and restricted the gains, traders said. At the interbank foreign exchange, the domestic unit opened at 85.53 and reached an intraday high of 85.42 and a low of 85.56. It finally settled at 85.51 (provisional), up 6 paise from its previous closing of 85.57. Meanwhile, the dollar index dipped 0.05 per cent to 99.04. *—PTI*

Orkla India files IPO papers with Sebi

NEW DELHI, 11 JUNE

Orkla India, which owns spices and condiments brands MTR and Eastern, has filed preliminary papers with markets regulator Sebi for an Initial Public Offering (IPO). The company's IPO is a complete offer for sale (OFS) of 2.28 crore equity shares by promoter and other shareholders, according to the draft red herring prospectus (DRHP) filed on Tuesday. Under the OFS, promoter Orkla Asia Pacific Pte and shareholders Navas Meeran and Feroz Meeran are offloading shares. At present, the promoters, Orkla Asia Pacific Pte Ltd and Norwegian industrial investment company Orkla ASA, hold 90 per cent stake, while Navas Meeran and Feroz Meeran own 5 per cent stake each in the company. Orkla India, formerly known as MTR Foods, is a multi-category Indian food company, which manufactures products such as spices and masalas, ready-to-eat sweets and breakfast mixes, under prominent brands such as MTR, Rasoi Magic, and Eastern. *—PTI*

PHOTO: ANI

Machaxi raises $1.5M in funding round

NEW DELHI, 11 JUNE

Sports tech company Machaxi has raised USD 1.5 million (about Rs 12.8 crore) in a funding round led by Zerodha's Rainmatter and participation from former Indian badminton player Prakash Padukone. The Bengaluru-based company will use the funding to expand its AI-powered badminton coaching from the city to Hyderabad, Pune, and Chennai, a company statement said. Further, Machaxi is partnering with the Padukone School of Badminton to launch a programme to establish over 1,000 coaching centres across India within the next four years. *—PTI*

Markets close higher on US-China tension

Sensex rose by 123 pts while Nifty gained 37 pts; 2,227 stocks advanced as 1,821 declined

MUMBAI, 11 JUNE

Benchmark Sensex closed higher by 123 points while Nifty rose for a sixth consecutive day on Wednesday following a rally in global markets amid optimism over US-China trade talks and foreign fund inflows.

In a volatile session, the 30-share BSE Sensex rose by 123.42 points or 0.15 per cent to settle at 82,515.14. During the day, it climbed 391.79 points or 0.47 per cent to 82,783.50 , driven by gains in IT and energy shares.

In its sixth straight day of gains, the 50-share NSE Nifty ended 37.15 points or 0.15 per cent up at 25,141.40. The index moved between a low of 25,081.30 and a high of 25,222.40 during the day. In the six sessions to Wednesday, Nifty gained 598 points or 2.42 per cent.

After a flat start, the Nifty gradually moved higher in the first half and tested the resistance at 25,200, but failed to sustain the momentum at close, Ajit Mishra – SVP, Research, Religare Broking Ltd said.

From the Sensex pack, HCL Tech, Infosys, Tech Mahindra, Reliance Industries, Bajaj Finserv, ICICI Bank, Tata Motors and Eternal were the lead gainers.

Power Grid, Adani Ports, IndusInd Bank, Nestle, HDFC Bank and Hindustan Unilever were among the laggards."Profit-booking continues in the broader markets, driven by elevated domestic valuations. However, large-cap resilience is supporting the indices, with institutional investors favouring companies with stable earnings outlooks.

"Auto and IT sectors remain in focus - auto stocks are gaining on improved monthly sales, while IT shares are benefiting from optimism around a potential US-China trade resolution," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Investments Ltd, said.

The BSE smallcap gauge went up by 0.06 per cent while midcap index dipped 0.12 per cent.

Financial Services, FMCG, industrials, power, utilities, services, capital goods and bankex were among the laggards.

As many as 2,227 stocks advanced while 1,821 declined and 132 remained unchanged on the BSE. *—PTI*

Hindustan Zinc declares Rs 10 interim dividend for FY26

Hindustan Zinc Ltd, a subsidiary of Anil Agarwal-owned Vedanta, has declared its first interim dividend for FY 2025–26 at Rs 10 per share (500 per cent on the Rs 2 face value), with a record date of 17 June. With a 63.42 per cent stake, Vedanta will receive Rs 2,679 crore. The company last paid a dividend in August 2024 at Rs 19 per share. In Q4 FY25, Hindustan Zinc posted strong results: revenue rose 20 per cent year-on-year to Rs 9,087 crore, net profit surged 47 per cent to Rs 3,003 crore, and EBITDA increased 32 per cent to Rs 4,820 crore. The EBITDA margin expanded to 53 per cent. The stock rose 1.63 per cent on Tuesday to Rs 533.70, gaining 23 per cent in May. *—Agencies*

QIP IMPACT

IREDA raises ₹2,000 crore via QIP route

NEW DELHI, 11 JUNE

State-owned IREDA has raised over Rs 2,000 crore through the issuance of qualified institutions placement.

The qualified institutions placement (QIP) issue, which was open from June 5-10, received an encouraging response from both domestic and foreign qualified institutional buyers (QIBs), including insurance companies, scheduled commercial banks and foreign portfolio investors.

The board has approved the allotment of equity shares to eligible qualified institutional buyers in its meeting held on Wednesday.

The QIP was oversubscribed with bids amounting to Rs 2,005.90 crore against the base issue size of Rs 1,500 crore, achieving a subscription of 1.34 times. The capital was mobilised by issuing 12.15 crore equity shares at Rs 165.14 per share, which includes a premium of Rs 155.14 per share over the face value of Rs 10, IREDA said.

The issue price of Rs 165.14 reflects a discount of 5 per cent to the floor price of Rs 173.83 per equity share.

The capital raised through this issue will further strengthen IREDA's tier-I capital and overall capital adequacy ratio (CAR), enhancing its capacity to support the expanding renewable energy sector in India.

"The successful completion of this QIP in a short span after our IPO in November 2023 is a testament to the trust and confidence the investor community and the MNRE have reposed in the company," IREDA Chairman and Managing Director Pradip Kumar Das said. *—PTI*

E-comm, retail policies on the anvil: Goyal

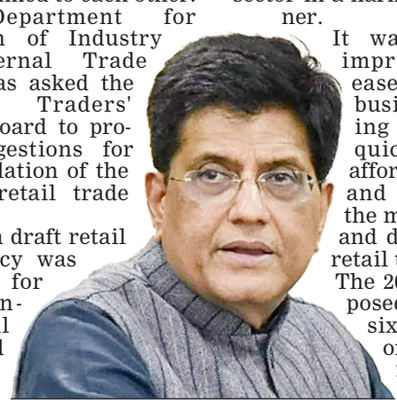
BERN, 11 JUNE

The proposed national e-commerce and retail trade policies are under discussions as both are linked to each other, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal has said.

Since the e-commerce sector is an evolving and fast-changing subject, "we did come out with certain ideas, but I think we will have to revise the policy to make it more contemporary, and it is under discussion," he said.

The minister added that the retail trade policy is also under discussion because they are linked to each other.

The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) has asked the National Traders' Welfare Board to provide suggestions for the formulation of the national retail trade policy.



In 2021, a draft retail trade policy was prepared for streamlining retail trade and development of all formats of the retail trade sector in a harmonious manner.

It was aimed at improving the ease of doing business, ensuring easy and quick access to affordable credit, and facilitating the modernisation and digitisation of retail trade.

The 2019 draft proposed to address six broad areas of the e-commerce ecosystem - data, infrastructure development, e-commerce marketplaces, regulatory issues, stimulating domestic digital economy and export promotion through e-commerce.

Goyal also said the world trade is facing severe geo-political challenges, but India has consistently emerged as a winner in such times. The country's exports of goods and services will certainly cross USD 825 billion in 2025-26, he said.

Despite global economic uncertainties, the country's overall exports touched an all-time high of USD 825 billion, he said. *—PTI*

Google offers buyout to employees amid cost cutting

MUMBAI, 11 JUNE

Google is downsizing its workforce, offering US-based employees in several divisions the option to leave quietly with severance.

The CNBC reported that the recent move targets teams across Knowledge & Information (K&I), which includes search, ads, and commerce, as well as central engineering, marketing and research. The CNBC called it a strategic move rather than a desperate measure.

The CNBC report said that K&I chief Nick Fox put it bluntly in a company memo and told employees, "If you're disengaged or underperforming, this is your way out. But if you're thriving, stay the course. We have ambitious plans and tons to get done."

This is said to be part of a broader cultural shift at Google. Since mass layoffs in early 2023 rattled employee trust, buyouts have become the preferred tool for managing headcount.

But there's a catch: many of these offers are tied to new return-to-office mandates. Remote employees living within 80km of a Google campus are being called back into hybrid schedules.

With buyouts replacing layoffs, Google's restructuring has become quieter – but no less consequential. *—Agencies*

Social security coverage up 45% in 10 yrs

NEW DELHI, 11 JUNE

India's social security coverage has increased to 64.3 per cent in 2025 from 19 per cent in 2015, according to the International Labour Organization (ILO) data.

As per the ILO, India now ranks second in the world in terms of beneficiary count, providing social protection to around 94 crore citizens.

"The increase marks the fastest expansion in social protection coverage worldwide, reflecting the government's unwavering commitment to 'Antyodaya' i.e., empowering the last mile and fulfilling the promise of leaving no one behind," said Labour Minister Mansukh Mandaviya who was in Geneva to attend the 113th session of the International Labour Conference (ILC) of the ILO.

According to an official statement, ILO has acknowledged India's achievement and officially published on its dashboard that 64.3 per cent of India's population, i.e. over 94 crore people, are now covered under at least one social protection benefit.

It is an unprecedented 45 percentage point surge over the past decade, the global body has said. *—PTI*

India tea exports rise by 9.92% in 2024: Tea Board

KOLKATA, 11 JUNE

Tea exports from India increased by 9.92 per cent at 254.67 million kg, from January to December 2024, against 231.69 million kg in the previous calendar year.

According to the latest data released by Tea Board, the production of tea in the north Indian estates during the 2024 stood at 154.81 million kg, as compared to 141 million kg in the preceding period from January to December 2023, registering a rise of 9.79 per cent year-on-year.

In South India, production from January to December 2024 stood at 99.86 million kg, as against 90.69 million kg in 2023. *— PTI*

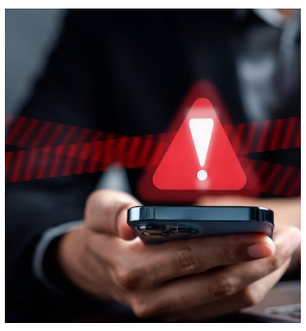
Airtel blocks 1.8L fraud links in Karnataka

BENGALURU, 11 JUNE

Bharti Airtel has blocked over 1.8 lakh malicious links and protected more than 2.3 million users in Karnataka within just 25 days of launching its AI-powered fraud detection system.

As part of a nationwide rollout, the system is automatically enabled for all Airtel mobile and broadband customers.

It scans and filters suspicious links shared via SMS, WhatsApp, Telegram, Facebook, Instagram, email, and web browsers. Leveraging real-time threat intelligence, the system analyses over one billion URLs daily and blocks harmful sites in under 100 milliseconds.



This initiative aims to tackle the threat of online fraud across India and enhance user safety without requiring any manual setup from customers. *—PTI*

Vodafone Idea launches 5G services in Bengaluru

BENGALURU, 11 JUNE

- This rollout follows Vi's recent 5G launches in Mumbai, Delhi-NCR, Patna and Chandigarh, and is part of the company's strategic roll out in all 17 priority circles, where it has acquired 5G spectrum, by August this year

Vodafone Idea has announced the launch of its 5G services in Bengaluru starting on Wednesday.

This rollout follows Vi's recent 5G launches in Mumbai, Delhi-NCR, Patna and Chandigarh, and is part of the company's strategic roll out in all 17 priority circles, where it has acquired 5G spectrum, by August this year.

"Vi users in Bengaluru with 5G-enabled devices can now access Vi 5G services, designed to power the city's digitally savvy population with superior online experiences. As an introductory offer, Vi is providing unlimited 5G data to users on plans starting from Rs 299. Customers can enjoy seamless streaming, gaming, video conferencing, faster downloads, and real-time cloud access," Vodafone Idea said in a statement. *— PTI*

AI IN SUGARCANE FARMING

India's AI market to triple to $17B: Report

NEW DELHI/ CHHATRAPATI SAMBHAJINAGAR, 11 JUNE

The Indian AI market is expected to grow to over USD 17 billion by 2027, more than tripling its current size, driven by increased investments in enterprise technology, a flourishing digital ecosystem, and a strong pool of skilled professionals, according to BCG.

The nation makes up 16 per cent of the world's AI talent, placing it behind only the US, reflecting both its demographic advantage and strong STEM education system.

Boston Consulting Group (BCG), in a report titled "India's AI Leap: BCG Perspective on Emerging Challengers", said India has a thriving AI ecosystem with over 600,000 AI professionals, 700 million internet users, and a surge of AI startups with over 2000 launched in the past three years.

With a large base of internet users and extensive smartphone adoption, India generates massive volumes of data, which is the fuel for training AI models.

Additionally, the use of AI could bring down the need of water in sugarcane farming by 50 per cent and increase the per acre produce by nearly 30 per cent, an expert in the field said on Wednesday.

Notably, a meeting was recently held in Pune in the presence of Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar and former Union Agriculture Minister Sharad Pawar where the use of AI in sugarcane farming was discussed.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Vasantdada Sugar Institute and Agricultural Development Trust was signed to explore ways to ensure this technology reaches as many farmers as possible. *—PTI*

Liquor stocks fall; United Spirits drops nearly 7%

NEW DELHI, 11 JUNE

Shares of breweries and distilleries companies declined on Wednesday after the Maharashtra cabinet approved revenue-boosting changes in the excise department, including a liquor duty hike.

United Spirits dropped 6.63 per cent, Tilaknagar Industries dipped 4.83 per cent, Allied Blenders and Distillers tanked 4.57 per cent, Radico Khaitan declined 3.30 per cent, United Breweries slipped 0.40 per cent and Globus Spirits (0.14 per cent) on the BSE. As per the cabinet's decision, the excise duty on Indian Made Foreign Liquor (IMFL) will be raised from three times to 4.5 times the declared manufacturing cost (up to Rs 260 per bulk litre), while duty on country liquor will rise from Rs 180 to Rs 205 per proof litre.

The state has also introduced a new category, grain-based Maharashtra Made Liquor (MML), to be produced exclusively by local manufacturers. MML brands will require new registrations. *—PTI*

No panic, but England not good enough: Captain Kane on WC

England booed after losing to Senegal, first defeat under coach Tuchel

England's Harry Kane celebrates scoring his side's first goal in the 3-1 international friendly defeat to Senegal *PHOTO: X/@HARRYKANE*

NEW DELHI, 31 OCT

England were well beaten in a 3-1 defeat by Senegal despite taking an early lead through Harry Kane

England were booed off after being well beaten by a vibrant Senegal in an international friendly at the City Ground.

Captain Harry Kane gave his side an early lead, tapping home after Anthony Gordon's shot was parried, before Ismaila Sarr pegged the hosts back before half-time.

Habib Diarra put the visitors ahead just after the hour mark, and England thought they had equalised late on through Jude Bellingham, but it was subsequently ruled out after a VAR check for a Levi Colwill handball. In stoppage time, Cheikh Sabaly scored a richly deserved third goal for Senegal, who became the first African side in history to beat England.

Hired amid skepticism because of his nationality, German coach **Thomas Tuchel** was brought in as England manager to get the national team from soccer's birthplace "over the line" at a World Cup for the first time since 1966.One year out from the 2026 tournament in North America, and Tuchel has already run into problems and is feeling the wrath of England's fans, too. The 3-1 loss to Senegal at home in a friendly match on Tuesday brought a crashing end to Tuchel's honeymoon period that was already tottering after England could only eke out a feeble 1-0 win over 173rd-ranked Andorra four days earlier. *—PTI*

Finland go top of qualifying group with a 2-1 win

FINLAND, 11 JUNE

Goals from Joel Pohjanpalo and Benjamin Kallman earned Finland a 2-1 home win over Poland in Helsinki on Tuesday to send the hosts top of their World Cup qualifying group.

The home side took a 31st-minute lead when Polish keeper Lukasz Skorupski was dispossessed by Finland forward Pohjanpalo. Skorupski then fouled Robin Lod, and Pohjanpalo converted the resulting penalty.

Finland doubled their advantage in the 64th minute when Oliver Antman's squared ball across the area was fired home by substitute Kallman. Still, Jakub Kiwior bundled the ball into the net five minutes later to pull one back for Poland.

A serious medical emergency in the stands led to a long suspension of play in the 80th minute, but Poland could not find another goal, and Finland, looking to qualify for their first World Cup, took all three points.

Poland's preparation had been overshadowed by Robert Lewandowski's decision not to play under current coach Michal Probierz after he was stripped of the captaincy, with Piotr Zielinski, currently injured, taking over.

Finland are on seven points after four games in Group G, one point ahead of the Netherlands. *—PTI*

Finland celebrates after the match *PHOTO: X/@UEFA.COM*

PHOTO: X

Vinicius Júnior's goal sends Brazil to 2026 World Cup

SÃO PAULO, 11 JUNE

A goal by Vinicius Júnior secured Brazil a place in the 2026 World Cup, quite a momentous home debut for Carlo Ancelotti as head coach.The once prolific duo at Real Madrid helped Brazil to a 1-0 win over Paraguay at Sao Paulo. Ecuador secured its place at next year's global tournament later Tuesday with a 0-0 draw at Peru.Defending champion Argentina, held to a 1-1 draw by Colombia, had already qualified and is assured of finishing atop South American qualifying. Ecuador and Brazil each have 25 points in the standings, but the Ecuadorians are in second spot based on victories.*—PTI*

PHOTO: X

Pooran named captain of MLC team MI New York

NEW YORK, 11 JUNE

Just-retired West Indies batting star Nicholas Pooran has been appointed captain of MI New York for the upcoming season of Major League Cricket here. The 29-year-old Pooran announced his retirement from international cricket on Tuesday after "much thought and reflection," even though he did not give any specific reasons for his stunning decision. "there's a new commander in town Captain Nicholas Pooran," the inaugural MLC champions posted on X."This left-handed wicket-keeper batter is one of the world's most feared batters going around. Pooran was the highest run-scorer in the 2023 MLC season.*—PTI*

Mumbai Falcons to take on Maratha Royals in final

MUMBAI, 11 JUNE

Shreyas Iyer-captained SoBo Mumbai Falcons will look to make the most of their current form when they take on Maratha Royals Mumbai South Central in the final of the T20 Mumbai League here on Thursday. The Iyer-led side recorded four wins in five matches to make it to the summit clash, defeating NaMo Bandra Blasters by five wickets in the semifinal here on Tuesday. However, Iyer fell for just one in the semis, and the Falcons' skipper will look to make amends in the summit clash, which gives him another opportunity to win a trophy a few days after missing the Indian Premier League title with Punjab Kings.*—PTI*

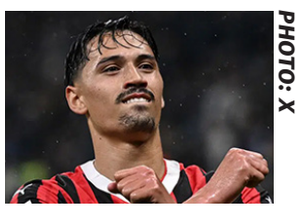


PHOTO: X

Man City signs Reijnders from AC Milan

MANCHESTER, 11 JUNE

Manchester City concluded a $150 million spending spree ahead of the Club World Cup by announcing the signing of Netherlands midfielder Tijjani Reijnders from AC Milan on Wednesday. The 26-year-old Reijnders moved for an initial fee of 55 million euros ($63 million) and is the second midfielder, after France playmaker Rayan Cherki, to join City in the special June 1-10 transfer window created to allow sides in the 32-team Club World Cup to reshape their squads. City paid Lyon $41 million for Cherki and also signed Algeria left-back Rayan Aït-Nouri from Wolverhampton for $42 million.*—PTI*

Australia qualifies for 2026 WC win over SA

MELBOURNE, 11 JUNE

Connor Metcalfe scored his first goal for Australia, and Mitchell Duke iced the 2-1 victory in Saudi Arabia that ensured the Socceroos qualified for a sixth straight World Cup.

Needing just to avoid a five-goal defeat to secure direct entry to the 2026 tournament, the Socceroos rallied with Metcalfe equalizing just before halftime with a left-foot strike and Duke putting them ahead with a 48th-minute header. Abdulrahman Al Oboud had opened for the Saudis after 19 minutes.

Goalkeeper Mat Ryan made five saves, including a late penalty, in his 100th international for Australia. The Socceroos had to qualify through playoffs in 2018 and 2022, and so earning the direct entry took some pressure off.

"We've done the first part qualifying automatically," Socceroos coach Tony Popovic said. *—PTI*

ENGLAND INCLUDES TEENAGE STAR EDDIE JACK

LONDON, 11 JUNE

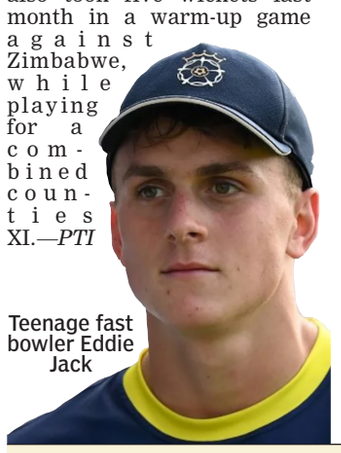
Teenage fast bowler Eddie Jack has been "invited to practise" with England's senior team ahead of the first Test against India after producing impressive efforts for the Lions against India A in the two four-day games, according to a report.

The teenager's call-up comes at a time when England's pace stocks are depleted with less than 10 days to go for the opening Test.

India begins their new World Test Championship cycle, taking on England in a five-match series beginning with the first match at Headingley from 20 June.

The 19-year-old Hampshire seamer caught the selectors' attention by dismissing India batter KL Rahul, who had scored a century in the first innings, during their drawn second unofficial Test in Northampton. Standing at 6-foot-4, Jack has "impressed" the England Lions' coaching group, including Andrew Flintoff, Mark Wood and Graeme Swann, The Times, London, reported.

Jack, who is yet to make his County Championship debut for Hampshire, has played two first-class matches, both against India A, and represented England U-19s earlier this year in South Africa. He also took five wickets last month in a warm-up game against Zimbabwe, while playing for a combined counties XI.*—PTI*



Teenage fast bowler Eddie Jack

F1 CANADIAN GRAND PRIX

Aston Martin's Stroll fit to race at home

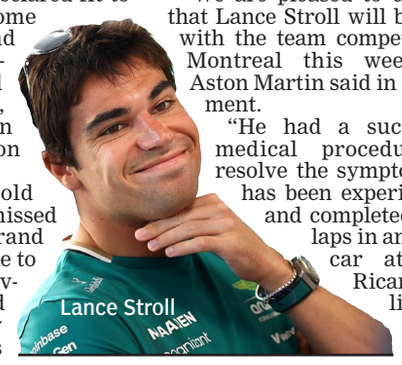
PARIS, 11 JUNE

Formula One driver Lance Stroll has been declared fit to race at his home Canadian Grand Prix after recovering from hand and wrist pain, his Aston Martin team said on Wednesday.

The 26-year-old Canadian had missed the Spanish Grand Prix on June 1 due to the problem, having experienced pain for many weeks, which his medical consultant believed stemmed from surgery following a cycling accident in 2023.

"We are pleased to confirm that Lance Stroll will be back with the team competing in Montreal this weekend," Aston Martin said in a statement.

"He had a successful medical procedure to resolve the symptoms he has been experiencing and completed some laps in an old F1 car at Paul Ricard earlier this week. *—PTI*



WADA, IOC call enhanced games 'immoral'

RIYADH, 30 OCT

In their latest show of unison, both international governing bodies and their Athletes Commission have aligned to harshly condemn the controversial multi-sport event set to take place in Las Vegas in May 2026, which promotes and encourages the use of performance-enhancing drugs among participants.

First, it was the International Olympic Committee, the

World Anti-Doping Agency, and the International Fair Play Committee issuing a joint statement of condemnation last year, when they considered that "an event like this would be devoid of any fair play or sportsmanship. Moreover, it represents a potentially catastrophic risk to the health of its participants." The Chinese Anti-Doping Agency followed suit, as well as Australia's Olympic Committee President Mark Arbib and the United States Anti-Doping Agency; more recently, World Aquatics also rose to publicly oppose the Enhanced Games. *—PTI*

South Africa bowls Australia out for just 212

LORD'S, 11 JUNE

South Africa has bowled Australia out for just 212 on Day 1 of the World Test Championship (WTC) 2025 final.

Kagiso Rabada was the star of the show, picking up a sensational five-wicket haul. Rabada took the first two wickets, dismissing Usman Khawaja and Cameron Green in one over, before taking three more after Tea.

Marco Jansen chipped in with three wickets as well. Steve Smith (66) and Beau Webster (72) were the only notable contributors with the bat for Australia. *—PTI*

Tilak rises to 3rd in ICC T20I batting rankings

DUBAI, 11 JUNE

India's Tilak Varma climbed one spot to third in the ICC Men's T20I Batting Rankings, while spinners Varun Chakaravarthy and Ravi Bishnoi held on to the third and seventh positions respectively in the latest bowling chart released on Wednesday.

Tilak now has 804 rating points, behind compatriot Abhishek Sharma, who is placed second. Australia's Travis Head continues to lead the batting chart while Suryakumar Yadav, who slipped one place to sixth, is the only other Indian in the top 10.In the bowling rankings, besides Chakaravarthy (706) and Bishnoi (674), left-arm pacer Arshdeep Singh is also in the top 10 with 653 points. Hardik Pandya continues to lead the all-rounders' list with 252 rating points.Among others, England's Adil Rashid moved up a spot to second in the bowling rankings following a strong showing in the 3-0 T20I series win over West Indies. The 37-year-old picked up 1/22 in Chester-le-Street, 1/59 in Bristol, and 2/30 in Southampton to surpass Wanindu Hasaranga and Chakaravarthy.

Rashid now has 710 points, just 13 behind top-ranked Jacob of New Zealand (723). Brydon Carse, Rashid's teammate, also made gains with two wickets across the last two games, jumping 16 spots to 52nd with 493 points.England's Ben Duckett rose 48 places to 16th after his blazing 84 off 46 balls in the final T20I, while Harry Brook moved up six spots to joint-38th following knocks of 35 not out and 34 in the series. *—PTI*

Tilak Varma and Rashid Khan *PHOTO: PTI*

MANU BHAKER, CHAIN SINGH ENTER FINALS BUT MISS MEDALS IN SHOOTING WC

Elavenil improves record, bags air rifle bronze for India's first medal in Munich *PHOTO: X/@ISSF-SPORTS.ORG*

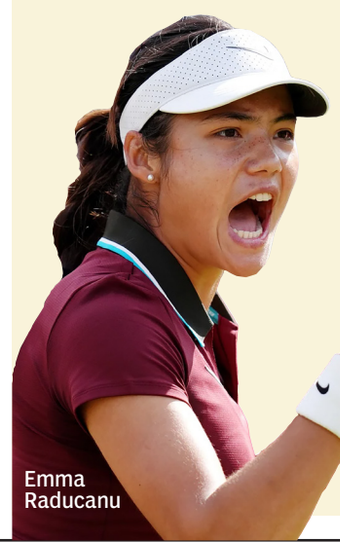
MUNICH, 11 JUNE

Paris Olympics medallist Manu Bhaker and senior pro Chain Singh made it to the finals of their respective events but could not nail a podium finish as India endured a medal-less day at the ISSF World Cup here on Wednesday.

Double Olympic bronze-medallist shooter Bhaker finished sixth in 25m pistol after entering the eight-shooter final, placing fifth with an aggregate 'precision' and 'rapid fire' score of 588. Chain made it to the final of the men's 50m rifle 3-positions event on the back of a fine qualification round score, but finished seventh in the eight-shooter medal round.On the opening day of the competition on Tuesday, India won a bronze through Elavenil Valarivan in the women's 10m air rifle event. Bhaker shot 290 in precision and a superb 298 in the rapid fire round to aggregate 588 going into the finals.The medal round, didn't go as expected, as the winner of the Olympics bronze medals in women's and mixed team 10m air pistol events was out gunned by the Chinese and Korean shooters. *—PTI*

QUEEN'S CLUB

Emma reign begins with brutal domination



Emma Raducanu

DUBAI, 11 JUNE

Emma Raducanu, the 2021 US Open champion, has set the grass season on fire with a stunning performance at the Queen's Club, obliterating her first-round opponent, Cristina Bucsa, ruthlessly.

In just over an hour of play, Raducanu left no room for doubt as she powered through to a 6-1, 6-2 victory over the qualifier ranked world No. 112. After a brief tie in the first two games, Raducanu unleashed her full potential, winning nine consecutive games to establish a commanding lead of 6-1, 4-0. Despite a brief resurgence from Bucsa, Raducanu maintained her composure and secured the win with ease, showcasing her dominance on her favorite surface, grass. The 18-year-old sensation will now advance to the round of 16 at Queen's, where she is set to face either Wimbledon champion Barbora Krejcikova or Rebecca Sramkova.

Wimbledon Champion Krejcikova suffers shock Queen's exit

Barbora Krejcikova's preparations for her Wimbledon title defence suffered a major setback as the Czech crashed to a shock defeat against Rebecca Sramkova at Queen's Club on Tuesday. Krejcikova beat Italy's Jasmine Paolini in three sets in last year's Wimbledon final to win her second Grand Slam crown.

But the 29-year-old's hopes of repeating that memorable triumph were rocked by her 6-4, 6-3 loss to Slovakia's Sramkova in the opening round of the Wimbledon warm-up event in London. *—PTI*

Barbora Krejcikova

Indian junior women's team fights past Belgium

ANTWERP, 11 JUNE

Indian junior women's hockey team edged out Belgium 2-1 to register their second successive win during the European tour here.

Lalthantluangi (35') and Geeta (50') scored for India after a goalless first half at the Hockey Center of Excellence on Tuesday. India scored the opening goal after Lalthantluangi successfully converted a penalty stroke.

In the last quarter, Van Hellemont (48') scored the equaliser through a field goal.

However, two minutes later, Geeta replied with a field goal and grabbed the winner for India. India then defended well to fend off the Belgian attacks in the final 10 minutes.

India had beaten Belgium 3-2 in the first match, and the visitors will next play their European counterparts in the third and final match on 12 June. *—PTI*